Sub-Mariner

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Based on the Marvel Comic

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MARVEL STUDIOS

MISHER FILMS

SMASH CUT IN ON: a baseball bat coming right at our heads.

EXT. PHILLIPPINE SEA - DAY

A net shrinks around a pod of dolphins trapped with a school of tuna. JAPANESE FISHERMEN bob in skiffs around the perimeter. They gaff tuna and club the dolphins which get in the way.

A stern OLD FISHERMAN directs the outfit. It's a low-tech, traditional operation: primitive, violent, wasteful. A gust of wind makes the Old Fisherman look over his shoulder. Lightning cracks black sky in the distance.

OLD FISHERMAN
Hurry or I'll leave you lazy bastards out here for the typhoon!

An unearthly SHRIEKING rises from the compacting, churning mass. And then dolphins everywhere begin SNAPPING at bats, gaffs, stray arms. The Fishermen are astonished.

YOUNG FISHERMAN
They never fight back!

The pandemonium builds and builds, the dolphins growing more and more violent. They're the attackers now. It's all the Fishermen can do to defend themselves.

In the center is a WHITE DOLPHIN. The Old Fisherman sees her, hauls his skiff along the net toward her.

OLD FISHERMAN
The cow. They're protecting her.

YOUNG FISHERMAN
Leave them! They've gone mad!

OLD FISHERMAN
Those tuna are worth thousands!

The chaos reaches its climax. He grabs a baseball bat, raises it high over the White Dolphin... and clubs her.

Silence falls over the scene. The other dolphins go still. Watch him. Eyes filled with eerie intelligence. A terrible sense of violated taboo.

Waves begin to roll the animal over. The Young Fisherman REACTS to something in the water. Other fishermen let out terrified Shinto prayers.

The Old Fisherman looks down: something is clinging to the belly of the White Dolphin. Unable to believe his eyes, the Old Fisherman leans over the side, and from the ocean, by the ankle, lifts... A HUMAN BABY BOY.

EXT. GUARD POST, OKINAWA - NIGHT

Tropical rain roars off a guard post. In front of its razor wire-topped gate stands a sign: USMC CAMP BUTLER, OKINAWA.

CHESTER NIXON, 20s, in poncho and battle gear, paces in front of the fence, alert, oblivious to the downpour. A window opens behind him. Other SOLDIERS inside are dry, comfortable, doing paper work. A MARINE OFFICER calls out:

MARINE OFFICER
Hey, Nixon, I think the Commies have the night off!

NIXON
Sir! That's what they want you to think, Sir!

SPLASHING FOOTSTEPS from the darkness. Nixon snaps around, M-16 up, barrel light on just in time to catch a glimpse of the Old Fisherman escaping into the night.

Nixon starts after him, but stops at the sight of something on the ground. He signals the post. Spotlights clunk on, and the road in front of the gate flares into brilliance and silhouettes. In a puddle lies the INFANT NAMOR.

ON NIXON: a long beat, not knowing what to do. And then he slings his gun and picks the baby up, never having held one in his life.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A powerful motocross bike streaks across white-hot desert. The rider is NAMOR, 20s, but nobody knows him by that name yet. They call him NIX. Proud, angry, always out-of-place, his dark, mongrel good looks betray an exile in his own skin.

SUPER: THE PRESENT.

He slaloms through a stand of cacti and rocks. Donning a helmet, he tips the visor, guns the engine, hops a rise --

-- and hits the hood of a derelict car which ramps him into the air over a RAZOR WIRE FENCE. On the pole beneath a SURVEILLANCE CAMERA is a sign. DANGER. LIVE FIRE AREA.

INT. GUARD TOWER, MARINE BASE - DAY

A high-tech guard tower looks over the runway at the heart of a sprawling desert Marine Corps base. Nixon, now early 50s and wearing the stripes of a Gunnery Sergeant, stares at a monitor, one of dozens with shots of fence lines.

Frozen there is Namor flipping him the bird.

EXT. ARTILLERY RANGE - DAY

Namor buzzsaws across a crater-blasted moonscape. He dives down into one pit after another, launching into the air as he comes up the other side. It's the ultimate motocross course.

INT. HUM VEE - DAY

Nixon jolts along, gripping a radio in a Hum Vee packed with Marines. Two other Hum Vees roar along in its wake.

NIXON
Cease fire, sir! There's a trespasser on the range!

EXT. ARTILLERY EMPLACEMENT - DAY

ARTILLERY hammers away. An OFFICER shouts into a phone:

RANGE OFFICER
Again!? Dammit, Gunny, I'm gonna set my watch by this guy and then give it to you for your retirement!

EXT. ARTILLERY RANGE - DAY

Earth in front of Namor fountains into the sky. Airbursts spray fragments. Other shells leave huge craters. Namor follows the barrage, his motocross course literally changing in front of him as he goes. He howls in delight.

The barrage stops, dirt clears, and right there is a Hum Vee on a parallel access road. Namor slips bolt cutters from a saddlebag and speeds down into an arroyo.

He weaves along its length, finally emerging onto the flat near the fence... and the other two Hum Vees. Namor turns a hard left, speeds along the fence.

INT. HUM VEE - DAY

Nixon cuts the wheel hard and rams the accelerator into the floor. A SHOOTER loads beanbag ammo into a shotgun and stands up through the vehicle's roof.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Namor rooster-tails dust into the Shooter's face just as he fires, making him miss.

Namor takes a sudden turn into an almost impenetrable stand of cacti. A sign warns ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREA. The Hum Vees corner as best they can, but slam on the brakes.

EXT. TARMAC, MARINE BASE - DAY

Namor emerges from the cacti, turns onto the tarmac parallel to the runway. SERVICEMEN gawk as he blazes by. Two Hum Vees blunder around a hangar behind him in pursuit.

Squealing onto the opposite end of the tarmac is Nixon. Namor's trapped between them. He could cut out on the runway, but there's a landing C-141 STARLIFTER on final approach. Namor guns the bike, aims straight for Nixon.

INT. HUM VEE - DAY

Gunny Nixon races toward the helmeted Namor. There's no way to tell who Namor is, but somehow deep down Gunny knows. A flicker of confusion... but Gunny is no chicken, he's a goddamn Marine. He stomps the gas -- the Marines riding with him brace for impact --

EXT. RUNWAY, MARINE BASE - DAY

-- and Namor veers out onto the runway, missing the Hum Vee's bumper with a foot to spare. He flips up his visor, EYES FILLED WITH EMOTION. A beat. Then he banishes the feeling, checks Nixon's bootlegging Hum Vee in dogged pursuit. The C-141 flares out, and Namor --

INT. C-141 COCKPIT - DAY

-- cuts directly in front of it. The shocked PILOT and COPILOT react.

COPILOT
Touch and go!

PILOT
We're too heavy!

In a jump seat behind is an astonished JANE DRIVER, 20s, athletic, classy. Half scientist, half extreme-sports bum.

EXT. RUNWAY, MARINE BASE - DAY

The big cargo plane's rear wheels grab asphalt. Namor burns down the runway in front of it. It roars after him, looming over his head, air brakes spread wide, doing everything it can to keep from running him over.

INT. C-141 COCKPIT - DAY

Bracing herself, Jane looks at Namor. He glances back for a split second, making eye contact.

EXT. RUNWAY, MARINE BASE - DAY

Then he shuts his visor. The plane's nose gear drops right behind him. Its brakes lock up, smoke pours, tire fragments fly, and Namor ducks to avoid being swallowed by a huge engine pod as he peels out of the Starlifter's way.

INT. HUM VEE - DAY

Nixon's Hum Vee squeals to a stop, and Gunny watches helplessly as Namor vanishes into the maze of buildings and hangars on the far side of the runway.

EXT. BASE TRAILER PARK - DAY

The American flag flies proudly over a tidy trailer home at the precise center of a zero-scaped lot. Motocross bikes in various states of repair sit under a carport. The one from earlier is nowhere to be seen.

Namor works on a running engine. He flips a dust cover off his workbench. It's a tidy personal space laden with complex mechanical books, electrical equipment. He puts a probe in the engine, watches it analyze exhaust gasses: more mechanical alchemist than grease monkey.

NAMOR
He knows it's me.

A NAVAJO GIRL leans on the carport pillar, casual, but she clearly has a thing for him.

NAVAJO GIRL
We're talking about Gunny Nixon. Thousand yard stare, can't see what's in front of his face...

But Namor is self-absorbed, lost.

NAVAJO GIRL
He's not the only one with that problem.

NAMOR
Do you ever feel like something's wrong?

NAVAJO GIRL
With what?

NAMOR
Everything. Like something terrible has happened, but you don't know what. And now everything is out of place. Including you.

NAVAJO GIRL
Why do you stay here?

There's a rumble from down the lane; it's Gunny's truck. Namor stares at it. Wrong answer.

NAVAJO GIRL
You don't have to waste your life trying to find a family that doesn't exist. You can just make your own.

She walks away, leaving Namor staring at Gunny, her words sinking in belatedly.

INT. NIXON KITCHENETTE - DAY

A tiny kitchen table. Nixon eats, oblivious to Namor's presence. The trailer is as sterile as the emotional space between them. Spartan furniture, no family pictures. It's all we need to know about the last 20-odd years of Namor's life.

Namor waits for some question, some challenge, anything. Nothing. He can't stand it any more and:

NAMOR
How was your day?

Gunny stops, looks at him, emotionless.

NIXON
There's a Los Angeles class attack submarine called the Tucson. It's gone down with 110 men aboard.

Namor puzzles over the seeming non-sequitur. Surprised that Gunny's talking to him at all.

NAMOR
What's that got to do with you?

NIXON
A C-141 making a refueling stop here had a hard landing. Blew the nose gear, and its engine sucked up debris.

NAMOR
That's too bad.

NIXON
That plane was going to Guam. It's going to be late now. It was carrying a rescue crew. For the men on that sub.

Namor is stunned.

NAMOR
There are other planes...

NIXON
Not equipped to carry their gear.
(beat)
I should've left you in the ditch where I found you.

Namor stares, a knife in his heart. Gunny resumes shoveling his stew.

INT. HANGAR - NIGHT

Namor enters the hangar through a fire door. The crippled C-141 stands untended in the center of the space, its nose up on jacks. Namor lingers in the shadows, watches a CHIEF harangue his stressed-out GROUND CREW as they move one of the plane's massive engine pods to a distant service bay.

CHIEF
What's the status on that nose gear?

A MECHANIC on a phone, leans out of an office.

MECHANIC #1
No good, Chief, can't fix it. Flying a spare in from Iceland; should be here at 0900.

The news is a blow. Chief grits, turns away.

Namor looks at a nearby bin containing parts of the blown landing gear. Namor goes to it, pulls out parts.

INT. MOTOR POOL, MARINE BASE - NIGHT

Namor labors over a machine tool in the deserted motor pool garage. Sparks fly. He gets down to the gear's melted axle and stops. No amount of machining is going to fix it. He looks around. Gunny's Hum Vee sits there in the dark.

He approaches, goes underneath with a caliper. He comes back up with a smile and sparks his torch.

EXT. HANGAR - NIGHT

Jane, returning to the hangar, is about to enter when she sees the jimmied fire door. She goes to investigate, and behind a dumpster sees Namor's bike. She picks the black helmet off the handlebar. Recognition.

JANE
Son of a bitch...

INT. HANGAR - PREDAWN

Namor rolls the repaired nose gear under the plane.

AND THEN: A SOUND. He stops. A beat. There it is again. Like giggling children. He turns to find its source. Open behind him is the Starlifter's cargo hatch. A sustained ripple of squeals from inside.

ON NAMOR, some long-unused part of his mind reacting as the strange sound bleeds into a --

CHILD'S VOICE (O.S.)
...hungry...

Namor's blood goes cold. There's no one anywhere close by. Namor moves up the cargo ramp, disappears inside the plane.

INT. C-141 CARGO BAY - DAWN

Namor slides through the dimly lit bay. A maze of cargo nets and black-out partitions criss-cross the plane's interior. It's silent except for a hissing sound from the back. He passes between two NEWT SUITS, 7-foot tall, power-assisted gear for deep diving.

Namor reaches the center of the maze. The hissing comes from behind a curtain. He takes hold, throws it back--

-- and a BULBOUS WHITE HEAD the size of a trash can SNAPS at him!

Namor trips, pulls down the partition with him revealing a BELUGA suspended in a harness. The hissing: a mister spraying water over the animal. Two DOLPHINS in nearby slings laugh at him. Namor gets up, astonished.

JANE (O.C.)
Is this yours?

Namor turns, startled. She's holding his helmet.

NAMOR
Yeah.

She tosses it to him, and as he catches it, WHAM! Her vicious left hook meets his jaw.

JANE
You're the jerk who cut in front of my plane. What were you doing to them?

She means the animals. He touches his jaw, glares at her.

NAMOR
Nothing. I heard... I don't know. Thought somebody was hurt.

JANE
Like I believe that.

NAMOR
Guess I don't look like the kind of guy who'd care.

He looms there, uncouth-looking in his bad boy biker gear.

JANE
Your stunt may have gotten people killed.

NAMOR
So I hear.

But it's not sarcastic. Something in his eye keeps her from hauling off again. He looks at the stenciled cargo pallets. They're loaded with diving equipment.

NAMOR
You're NOAA.

JANE
And you know your alphabet.

She glances at the animals. They're still screeching, agitated. She breaks from the confrontation with Namor and goes over to calm them down.

JANE
If I were you I'd be running like hell, cause in 10 seconds I'm calling the MPs.

But he's not moving; he's just staring at the animals, fascinated. It throws her.

NAMOR
They have names?

JANE
The beluga is Gorby. That's Floyd, and that's Pink.

NAMOR
And you?

JANE
You know what? Why don't you tell me *your* name. For the cops.

NAMOR
People call me Nix. And the cops gave up on me a long time ago.

She didn't expect an answer, let alone his mysterious response. Pink squeals, interrupting the stand-off.

NAMOR
He's hungry.

Jane gives Namor a dubious look, then signals Pink. Pink chirps and nods. Jane turns back to Namor, surprised.

JANE
How did you know that?

Namor shrugs, stares at the animals, affected by them and not knowing why. She fetches a bucket to feed them, keeps glancing at Namor, a bit unnerved by his intuition.

JANE
You must work with animals.

Namor shakes his head. Gorby coos at him.

JANE
I don't get this. They don't like strangers.

NAMOR
So you're a scientist.

JANE
An oceanographer.

NAMOR
I suppose your grant says you have to jump when the military calls.

JANE
Believe it or not some people just pitch in when there's a need.

Namor looks around at the hi-tech dive gear in a growing sense of envy. Remembering what it's all about though:

NAMOR
How are you going to rescue those sailors?

JANE
That's the job of the Navy's Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle team. Ours is to find them.

NAMOR
They don't know where the sub went down?

JANE
Quarter million mile search area.

NAMOR
Isn't there sonar, that sort of thing?

JANE
We've got a few tricks the machines don't.

NAMOR
Like what?

She hears his skepticism, and it annoys her at first, but as she speaks, her passion becomes infectious:

JANE
Like these guys here can taste the sub's oils miles away. Like they can go look at a thermocline 1000 feet down and see it's just a reflection. Like they can hear other animals reacting to the presence of a huge man-made contraption and actually understand what all the gossip is about. We've only seen 5 percent of the ocean with our machines. But these guys call it home.

NAMOR
You never told me your name.

JANE
Dr. Jane Driver. And you never told me what you're doing in here.

Namor regards the animals, then Jane. He turns to leave.

NAMOR
I hope you find them.

INT. HANGAR - DAWN

Jane comes down the cargo ramp and sees a commotion from the front of the plane. Mechanics are puzzling over THE REPAIRED LANDING GEAR. Jane's stunned. She pushes through the crowd to Chief.

CHIEF
Well, Doc, you must have a personal relationship with Santa Claus. Okay people! I want this crate off the ground in an hour!

Jane turns to see the fire door closing behind Namor.

EXT. TARMAC, MARINE BASE - DAY

The Starlifter's engines are warming up, crew doing last-minute checks, the cargo ramp still open. Namor watches from beyond a chain link fence. Gorby lets out a CRY. The dolphins join in. It's eerie, siren-like, calling him.

Resigned, Namor kicks his bike over and turns for the wide expanse of desert... and stops. He stares out there. It's empty; there's nothing for him. And then he looks over his shoulder at the plane.

INT. MOTOR POOL, MARINE BASE - DAY

The garage door rolls up. Gunny stands framed against the light, his Hum Vee's front end lying on the ground. The C-141 roars down the runway in the b.g., lifts into the sky.

INT. C-141 LOADMASTER'S PIT - DAY

Jane studies a fax by the window. Outside: solid blue sea 40,000 feet below. A COMM OFFICER nearby. Reading:

JANE
No SOSUS track. No implosion. No emergency beacon...

Over the white noise of the engines are SQUEALS from the animals in the cargo bay. Jane rises, goes to investigate.

INT. C-141 CARGO BAY - DAY

Jane emerges from the maze and discovers Namor staring vacantly at Pink and Floyd. It's as if Namor can't see her. A long, eerie beat. The animals sway in front of him, hypnotic.

JANE
You're in a lot of trouble.

It breaks the spell. He turns to her and just grins. The LOADMASTER suddenly appears behind Jane, sees Namor.

LOADMASTER
What's all the... who are you?

Jane looks at Namor, and before she knows what she's doing:

JANE
He's tech support from my lab.
Caught up with us this morning.

LOADMASTER
He's not on the manifest, Ma'am.

JANE
It was kind of hectic back there.
Can you put him on now? Sorry.

The exasperated Loadmaster exits. She waits a beat.

JANE
Why'd you do this?

NAMOR
I'd say you know something about
acting on impulse.

JANE
You fixed the landing gear.

NAMOR
What landing gear?

But he's not convincing. Light turbulence punctuates the moment, and they steady themselves.

NAMOR
Don't get excited. I just needed a
lift to anywhere but where I was.

JANE
Really.

NAMOR
Really.

JANE
Okay then. When we land, get
off, keep walking, and have a
good life.

She exits. He looks after her, daunted by the prospect.

EXT. TARMAC, GUAM - DAY

The C-141's ramp is open on a runway by the ocean. It's already thronged by GROUND CREW and vehicles, Jane weaving among them shouting orders. The animals and cargo are being rushed to nearby heavy-lifting helicopters.

Namor steps out into the tropical sun. For a long moment he just takes in the air, is blinded by colors. The palms between the runway and beach. Brilliant turquoise shades of water beyond. It pulls on him.

EXT. BEACH, GUAM - DAY

Namor ditches his leather jacket, revealing a cut-off tee; his arms are lean, rippled muscle. Surf rolls onto the quiet sand. Gentle. Mesmerizing. Water laps up and then retreats.

Tentative, Namor squats to touch the next wave, but the wave breaks short. He edges forward. Watches the following wave, reaches out for it... and it seems to TURN SOLID with THOUSANDS OF DEAD FISH.

He jumps back as the wave washes onto the sand. The lagoon is littered with dead fish as far as the eye can see.

Namor turns, appalled, looking to her for an explanation.

JANE
Fish kill. Toxic algal bloom most likely. But that's just a guess. Marine biologists' rule of thumb is there's an undiscovered species for every cubic meter of seawater. Not all of them are nice.

A whine of turbines makes her look to the helicopters.

JANE
So... good luck.

She walks away. And stops. Turns back. Namor is just standing there, lost, staring out to sea.

JANE
Hey. It's obvious you want to do the right thing. But if you don't swallow that pride you're going to choke on it.

A beat. It's a struggle for Namor.

NAMOR
I owe those sailors. I want to help.

JANE
That's a start. We'll work up to 'please' later.

Namor watches her for a moment, then follows. He never touches the water.

INT. CARGO HELICOPTER - DAY

Namor looks out the open door. A wake streams out behind a gray, utilitarian navy ship, the U.S.S. BAR HARBOR.

JANE
Don't open your mouth and meet me on the well deck.

The choppers lower the animals into the ocean. Jane grabs her fins and without so much as a pause jumps OUT. Namor watches her fall 50 feet to the water. He grins, impressed.

NAMOR
Whoa.

INT. WELL DECK, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

The bay's WELL DECK is open to the sea. The dolphins cruise in, Gorby towing Jane behind. The sea gate shuts, creating a pool for the animals inside the ship. Jane climbs up a ladder from the well.

Namor is waiting there for her with an enigmatic look on his face. He suddenly runs for the stern, seasick.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor hangs on a railing overlooking the flight deck. The ship plunges through the ocean. Crew detach fuel lines from the helicopters. Jane comes up, dressed now.

JANE
Last chance to go back. People will be worried about you.

Though still sick, he manages a cynical smirk.

JANE
Everybody's got somebody...

NAMOR
Oh yeah? Who do you have?

A beat.

JANE
I've got people. What about your family?

NAMOR
My parents... Probably some lowlife scumbags. Dumped me in a trash can or something. Gunny was never real forthcoming about it.

JANE
Gunny?

NAMOR
Just a guy. Adopted me would be too legal a term to describe our relationship. Found me somewhere and kept me. Gave me his name cause he couldn't think of anything else. And never let me call him anything but Gunny.

JANE
Service families can be tough.

NAMOR
Spent his life guarding fences.

It says it all. She gets him now, softens.

JANE
Real heroes don't wear masks. And they always sacrifice something in the end.

He stares out at the dramatic swells, the ultramarine deep.

NAMOR
I'm staying.

INT. SHIP'S FREEZER - DAY

Namor, in leather apron and gloves, hefts a hundred-pound ice block filled with FROZEN FISH to his shoulder, kicks the freezer door shut behind him. He winds his way down a corridor busy with passing SAILORS and into --

INT. WELL DECK, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

-- the well deck. It's a scene of intense activity as NAVY DIVERS prep zodiacs, fill rebreathers, pack salvage balloons. Namor is about to heave the ice block into the water with Gorby and the dolphins when --

-- JANE spikes it on a mechanical pincer hand and twirls it into the air. She's in a Newt Suit.

NAMOR
That thing's pretty cool.

JANE
Rated to 1100 meters.

She rotates the hand through 360 degrees, testing it when a voice from behind --

LT. CHISHOLM (OC)
Tin Can? Is that you?

-- turns Namor around. Approaching from a group of Divers is LT. BERT CHISHOLM.

LT. CHISHOLM
Son of a Gunny Nixon...

Namor recovers from his surprise, is instantly on guard.

NAMOR
Bert.

LT. CHISHOLM
It is you! Holy --

He glances at Jane, stops himself, a gentleman. He smiles at her, gets only a weak one back for his misplaced chivalry. He's rugged, fit, uber-military.

LT. CHISHOLM
What are you doing here?

NAMOR
Just going to ask you the same thing.

LT. CHISHOLM
Seals got boring. Transferred to Deep Sea Rescue. My unit got choppered here two days ago.

Chisholm eyes the block of ice, the apron. Smirks.

LT. CHISHOLM
So you're serving on this ship?

NAMOR
You could say that.

LT. CHISHOLM
Glad to see you stuck it out.
(beat)
So what is that? A fish-cicle?

Other Divers laugh. Namor ignores him, throws it into the well for the animals.

JANE
Why did you call him Tin Can?

Chisholm chuckles, and everyone waits expectantly. Namor, staring down at the animals, begins peeling his gloves off.

LT. CHISHOLM
Well, on the surface Nix looks like a pretty tough guy...

Namor turns, daring Chisholm to finish. Chisholm balks.

NAMOR
... But he folds under pressure.

Chisholm shrugs at Jane.

NAMOR
And it's a seafood sorbet.

LT. CHISHOLM
What?

NAMOR
Only a cousin-lovin' Ozark hillbilly would call it a fish-cicle.

POW! Namor slugs him. But before they can get more than a couple of blows into it, a steel CLAW grabs Namor, hoists him into the air. Navy Divers jump in, restrain Chisholm.

NAVY DIVER #1
OFFICER ON DECK!

Everything stops as REAR ADMIRAL KELLER, 40s, enters. Jane releases Namor. Keller turns an intense eye on Chisholm, then the others. Devoid of any sense of humor, he is relentless determination incarnate.

ADMIRAL KELLER
My personal friend Captain Jones of the Tucson would be gratified to see such professionalism deployed in his behalf. Of course he and over a hundred of his men are AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GODDAMN OCEAN!

His voice booms out. Everyone sobers.

ADMIRAL KELLER
But I didn't come down here to remind you of this fact.

ADMIRAL KELLER(cont'd)
I came to provide you with some mission context because I believe that *thinking* men and women perform best with information. CINCPAC has seen fit to declassify the Tucson's mission, so you may know that she was testing a powerful new sonar system called VIOLA. At this moment 58 ships are searching the Tucson's operations area, and more are en route. We do not know what happened to the submarine. The only clue we have is that there are no clues.
(beat)
We are looking for a needle in a field of haystacks. Our plan at present is to conduct side-scan sonar surveys over the entire area: in other words, examine every piece of straw in every haystack until we find the needle. This will take an enormous amount of time, time that the men on the Tucson may not have. If anyone has a better idea, they are to speak up. If a superior shoots you down, and you don't like it, come to me. Good ideas have no chain of command. That is all.

He exits. Namor turns to Jane. The arm of her Newt Suit whines and locks up. She damaged it lifting Namor.

JANE
Great. The servo.

NAMOR
I'll take a look.

He feels bad, but she's genuinely irritated.

JANE
1.2 million-dollar piece of hardware I trust my life to. Have at it.

She gives him a dark look, lumbers off.

INT. WORKSHOP, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Namor wears the sleeve of the disassembled Newt Suit. Parts are strewn all over the workshop. He manipulates the arm, putting it through its paces, seems satisfied.

INT. PASSAGEWAY, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Still wearing the arm, Namor makes his way through the late-night passageways of the ship. He looks for Jane.

INT. WARDROOM, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

He enters a darkened officer's wardroom. Jane is there alone, asleep in a chair in front of a row of laptops, note pads and empty coffee cups. She's beautiful. He's about to back out, but then sees something that arrests him:

ON ONE OF THE SCREENS is the bearded, soulful face of LEONARD MCKENZIE, 30's. It's a freeze-frame from an MPEG video. The picture quality, sideburns, etc. suggest it's from the 1980s.

Jane wakes up, sees Namor.

NAMOR
Sorry. Just wanted to let you know I think I got this working.

JANE
That was irony when I said have at it.

NAMOR
Handspace controls are off a Harley.

JANE
I think I'll still use the other suit.

It stings. She sees it.

NAMOR
Guess I wouldn't trust me either. Well just so you know, it'll work in a pinch.

He pinches with the suit's pincer claw, grins.

JANE
Shouldn't you be down below with the rest of the animals?

NAMOR
That thing with Chisholm. We were in SEAL training together. There was this pool exercise. An ascent tank.

NAMOR(cont'd)
Simulates an exit from a submarine a hundred feet down, like you would do in a clandestine insertion. You're supposed to swim up slowly, but I couldn't. The pressure... Did something to me. Couldn't equalize. Hurt all over. Hurt in ways I can't describe. I washed out on day 3. Never set foot in the ocean. Seeing Chisholm again, it's just... I should've been him.

The explanation is the closest he can get to apology.

NAMOR
So what are these?

He gestures to the stuff spread out on the table: ship's registers, 18th Century nautical charts, black and white photos of ships, insurance records, all variously marked 'LOST AT SEA,' 'CAUSE UNKNOWN,' 'LOCATION UNDETERMINED.'

JANE
Mysteries.

NAMOR
The only clue is there are no clues.

JANE
I was just looking for similar circumstances in the records.

NAMOR
I never knew there were so many accidents, so many lost ships.

JANE
Our memory is short. The sea's isn't. They add up over time.

He picks up a picture of the Tucson.

NAMOR
Do you think they're alive?

JANE
Depends how deep they are. Below 1000 meters the pressure would've crushed their hull.

A quiet beat. Namor gestures to McKenzie.

NAMOR
Who's that?

JANE
Leonard McKenzie. He was an oceanographer who vanished in '81 while studying the subsurface scattering layer. Disappeared just like the Tucson. Without a trace.

Jane hits a button, and McKenzie suddenly comes to life. He's sitting atop a small yellow minisub, THE OTTER. He talks to the camera, obviously a documentary interview.

MCKENZIE (V.O.)
What does it take to be a submariner? Preparation. Love of the ocean. I often think of the psalm, "Those that go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep."
(beat, thinking)
Yeah. I guess the most important thing of all... is wonder.

Haunted, Namor stares at the humble and sincere McKenzie.

NAMOR
What did you say he was doing?

JANE
Studying the subsurface scattering layer. It's a term for the tiny organisms about 2000 feet down. The biomass in that layer is equivalent to a hundred Amazon jungles. Concentrations can be so thick that sonar can't penetrate it.

NAMOR
So it's what, like a cloud?

JANE
Yeah, a bioluminescent...
(beat, insight)
... cloud.

INT. WARDROOM, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT (LATER)

A STEWARD pours coffee for the sweat-shirted Admiral Keller, the Bar Harbor's CAPTAIN, and various OFFICERS as they listen to Jane. Namor stands in a corner.

ADMIRAL KELLER
So you think the Tucson flew through a cloud --

JANE
-- the subsurface scattering layer --

ADMIRAL KELLER
-- and hit an uncharted seamount she couldn't see. Just like this guy McKenzie did 25 years ago.

CAPTAIN
He went down off the north coast of Japan. That's two thousand miles away.

JANE
The scattering layer conditions are similar here.

ADMIRAL KELLER
The Tucson had the latest sonar surveys.

JANE
That's the problem. Nobody does old-fashioned line soundings any more. Say you're a map maker doing a sonar survey. You survey 100 miles of utterly flat seabed when you hit a blurry spot a half mile across. It clears up and there's another 100 miles of flat seabed. What do you do? You blame the scattering layer and smooth out the map showing featureless abyssal plain.

He looks at the chart depicting the East Marianas Basin.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Here be dragons. At least in the old days they weren't afraid to admit they didn't know something.

Keller looks around. Nobody's committing themselves.

ADMIRAL KELLER
I'm dubious.
(beat)
But if you're right, and they're stuck on some underwater mountain... they might not be below crush depth. They might be alive. Where do we start?

She opens a laptop, shows them a SWIRLED, multi-colored satellite image of the ocean.

JANE
Infrared radiometry from SeaWiFS. It'll guide us to the densest parts of the scattering layer.

INT. MAIN BAY, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Namor chops bait, fills a bucket with fish heads and calamaries. The animals in the well stare at him like expectant dogs. Jane enters. She's in a robe.

JANE
We dive in the morning.

Namor stops to watch her disrobe to a sleek bikini. She dives into the well. The animals peel away to greet her.

Namor leans on the rail and watches her play. The lights are dim. The water glitters with bioluminescent algae. It's a magical, surreal moment, the fairie-fire trailing Jane. She sees him watching, becomes self-conscious.

NAMOR
Who were you?

She looks at him, not understanding.

NAMOR
Before you were this?

She takes in the animals, where she is.

JANE
Surfer girl from Ventura.

She's not exactly embarrassed, but expects some sort of amused reaction. When Namor doesn't give it to her:

JANE
This is where I lose most guys' respect.

NAMOR
You just made mine permanent.

The way he looks at her, she's deeply affected.

NAMOR
You love what you do.

JANE
I love finding things that are lost. And bringing people home.

NAMOR
Why?

She hides behind a smile.

JANE
Maybe I'm missing something myself.

NAMOR
Whatever it is you think you're missing... I don't see it.

Namor, realizing he's staring too long, starts to move off.

She signals Gorby. He scoops her up on his back, and she rides him like a surfboard, springs lightly to the ladder. Namor turns back, picks up her robe as she climbs out of the well. She takes it from him.

JANE
That's because it's a scientific fact that guys are blind.

She turns away, drying with her robe. Namor takes in her killer figure, unsure whether she's intentionally posing, but before he can think of anything else to say she tosses her head, flinging her wet hair to one side and --

-- a SINGLE DROP OF SEAWATER flies out into space.

Time dilates as the disc of water wobbles into the void. The droplet moves, surface tension taking hold, pulling it into the pure shape nature intended: A SPHERE.

CAMERA moving around it, finding the droplet's trajectory: straight for Namor's open right eye. The droplet hangs there for another fraction of a second, and then TIME RESUMES. It hits him. Namor flinches.

AND THEN PAIN. Namor grips his face as if he were hit by acid. He covers his eye and turns away. Jane, oblivious, exits with a subtle sashay, but Namor doesn't get to admire it as he gasps and staggers toward another hatch into --

INT. SHIP'S HEAD - NIGHT

-- the head. He slams the door and braces himself on the sink. He flips the faucets on and looks in the mirror. Slowly he lowers his hand... and opens his eye.

It is a completely white NICTITATING MEMBRANE.

He blinks - the inner eyelid disappears - and he jams his face down in the sink, frantic, washing it out. After a beat he dares to look again. The membrane is gone. He backs away, scared, leaving the faucets spraying.

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - DAY

A sturdy LAUNCH maneuvers near the Bar Harbor. Zodiacs loaded with Divers pound over the swells in support of --

EXT. OCEAN, MIDWATER - DAY

-- Jane who falls through the ocean in the titanium Newt Suit, arms and legs spread like a parachutist's. Gradations of light and infinite shadings of blue fade away into darkness below. The dolphins range past her.

EXT. DECK OF U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor watches the activity in the distance. Self-conscious, he dons some shades, goes through a hatch into --

INT. DIVE OPS, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

-- a high-tech dive operations center. Admiral Keller and the OPS PERSONNEL are too preoccupied to notice him.

JANE (V.O.)
Passing 300 meters.

EXT. MIDWATER - DAY

A strange, all-pervasive violet light saturates everything. A FLASHING STROBE approaches from below. It's an excited Gorby returning from the depths, the strobe is on his harness. Gorby taps his face.

JANE
What do you taste, Gorby?
Submarine?

Gorby makes an elaborate squeal and opens his mouth wide.

JANE
Big.... Dinner? Gorby!

But before she can chastise him, he dives. Jane tucks in her arms and accelerates down. She signals the dolphins.

JANE
This is where you guys get off.

The dolphins break off for the surface. A CRACKLING NOISE, previously just a faint background effect, begins to grow in volume. And out of the darkness appears:

EXT. OCEAN, ABOVE SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

A VAST, SILVER CLOUD. It undulates away from Janes' suit lights, stretching as far as she can see, an almost-solid, living carpet of glittering crustaceans, invertebrates and tiny fish. It's an awesome sight.

Jane punches controls in the hand spaces of her suit. With a blast of bubbles her descent slows, and she goes neutral.

JANE
Gorby! Where are you?

A glow streaks across the cloud. Then another. Generated by the animals: it's bioluminescence.

JANE
I've never seen the scattering layer this thick.

Jane activates her thrusters, but her arm LOCKS UP with a WHINE and starts her on an uncontrollable DIVE.

JANE
I've got a problem.

INT. DIVE OPS, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Her voice begins to break up, but everyone heard it.

JANE (V.O.)
...arm locked up... thruster's driving me down...

ADMIRAL KELLER
Say again?

JANE (V.O.)
Jettisoning... ergency... allast.

NAMOR
She took the suit...

OPERATOR
She's too far into the layer, we've lost contact.

The room jumps into crisis mode.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Support divers?

CAPTAIN
She's too deep.

The Admiral grabs a phone.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Dive Ops. What's DRV's status?

LT. CHISHOLM (V.O.)
Sir, we're at Ready-30.

ADMIRAL KELLER
30 minutes to get the rescue sub in the water...

NAMOR
The other suit!

ADMIRAL KELLER
Excuse me?

NAMOR
Somebody's got to use the other suit!

Keller looks at the other officers.

CAPTAIN
Descent rate's too slow. She'll be at crush depth before anyone could get to her.

Namor gets into Keller's face.

NAMOR
You got to do *something*!

CAPTAIN
Get him out of here!

Sailors grab Namor and manhandle him out the door.

INT. VARIOUS PASSAGEWAYS, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor twists from the sailors' grip as he stumbles to the deck outside the hatch. He jumps up and races through the ship, slamming people out of the way, sliding down ladders, stripping off his tee shirt as he crashes through into --

INT. DIVE READY ROOM, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

-- the dive ready room. Heading for the well deck on the far side, he kicks off his shoes and jeans, is down to his GREEN ATHLETIC BRIEFS, is ready to go commando --

-- but catches a glimpse of himself in a mirror. Hanging on a hook is a really cool-looking, military-issue 3/4s length, sleeveless bodysuit...

EXT. OCEAN, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

Jane swirls down through the layer. Ballast on her boots drops, slowing her descent, but not nearly enough.

INT. WELL DECK, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor hoists himself into the other Newt Suit, fumbles about, gets the power on. He sees a button marked VLF in among the collar instruments. He punches it.

NAMOR
Jane! Can you hear me! Jane!

JANE (V.O.)
Who is this?

Namor allows himself a split second of relief as he begins powering up the suit's arms and legs.

NAMOR
It's me. I'm coming after you. Hang in there.

INTERCUT BETWEEN JANE IN SUIT AND NAMOR:

JANE
Coming after me?

NAMOR
They can't get the DRV to you in time. I'm coming.

It makes Jane stop for a second. And then all seriousness.

JANE
No. Don't even think about it.

NAMOR
Too late for that one.

JANE
Please. Don't. I'm too deep.

And then she lets her heart speak.

JANE
I need you to stay alive. Please.

But it only commits him.

NAMOR
Then we got some things to sort out when we get back. Cause I need you to stay alive too.

Namor looks out through his helmet as the suit pressurizes, the motors take on the load, and he steps forward.

Like a metallic Frankenstein he clomps across the deck to the open rear of the ship, picking up a 300-pound air compressor as he goes. He pauses a beat at the edge, looks down at the broad, churning wake. And steps off.

EXT. UNDER WATER, BEHIND SHIP - DAY

The 600-pound suit with Namor in it hits the water, and the huge SHIP'S SCREWS shoot him into the turbulence. The weight of the compressor flips him over and accelerates him toward the bottom. He plummets like an out-of-control anchor past astonished Navy Divers.

INT. NAMOR'S NEWT SUIT - DAY

Attitude indicators on the inside collar of Namor's helmet whirl; the depth gauge rolls like a digital slot machine. As it passes 500 meters he releases the compressor and slows, but he's out of control and spinning mercilessly.

EXT. OCEAN, MIDWATER - DAY

Namor fights to stabilize himself. He stops struggling, and the suit rights itself. Now in foot-down free fall, he discovers the position Jane was using before.

INT. JANE'S NEWT SUIT - DAY

Jane looks at her depth gauge: 1075 meters. Every instrument blinks warnings: APPROACHING MAX DEPTH.

INT. NAMOR'S NEWT SUIT - DAY

Pitch black outside. It's a buffeting elevator ride to hell. He hits his lights, giving us a sudden sense of his 70 mph speed as he hurtles into the scattering layer, the cloud of tiny organisms swallowing him up.

Can't see anything, gauge now 1000 meters. And then he drops from the layer and he can see her.

EXT. OCEAN, BELOW SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

Namor streaks down like a comet behind Jane. He blows for buoyancy, extends his arm... and misses her, shooting past in a cloud of bubbles. Namor finally stops, and just as she's about to drop past, he catches her elbow.

She continues dragging him down but Namor's suit blows again, and they twirl gently together. Her thruster turns them, but they're no longer sinking. She looks at him, shock giving way as she registers what he's just done.

NAMOR
Guess I've got the falling hard and fast thing down.

He stares at her to make sure she gets it. She does. Together they look down into the abyss.

NAMOR
How deep is it here?

JANE
A mile deeper than Everest is tall.

There's a faint flash from below. It gets brighter. Rising lazily from the depths is Gorby's mangled harness.

JANE
(anguish)
Gorby...

NAMOR
What could have done that?

A deep, organic, FLUTTERING SOUND resonates from the darkness. Namor looks to Jane, alarmed.

JANE
Turn out your lights.

She extinguishes hers. Namor takes a moment longer. He strains into the gloom, lit every other second by the FLASHING LIGHT of Gorby's harness.

The fluttering grows louder, then recedes until all they can hear is their breathing. FLASH. Darkness. FLASH. Darkness.

FLASH: and right in front of them, are TWO ENORMOUS, WRITHING FORMS.

NAMOR
Holy sh --

Namor stabs on his lights, and the two GIANT SQUIDS lash out, whip-like tentacles wrapping around every limb.

A SQUID RIDER, its drapery of membranes giving it the appearance of a ragged cloak, clings to the squid's mantle. It turns its cowled head to him, an empty black chamber where a face should be.

Jane screams at the sight of the Squid Rider which has hold of her. The Riders turn their animals by the mantle, drive them hard toward the depths.

NAMOR
They're taking us down!

INT. JANE'S NEWT SUIT - DAY

Jane sees her depth gauge shoot past 1200 meters, shouts --

JANE
Flood your suit!

INT. NAMOR'S NEWT SUIT - DAY

Namor doesn't know how, struggles, eyes riveted to the depth gauge, isn't hearing Jane as she shouts rapid fire:

JANE (V.O.)
The valve by your neck the air pressure will spike let it out the helmet re --

Namor's depth gauge reads 1286 meters. He can't do it. He looks across at her; they make EYE CONTACT. And --

EXT. ABYSS - DAY

-- POW. Namor's Newt suit implodes.

INT. NAMOR'S NEWT SUIT - DAY

NAMOR'S POV: in an instant he is staring through the unfocused blur of seawater, all sound a dull vibration.

CLOSE ON HIS EYES. Pupils dilating, as if he's dead... but then they keep dilating. Becoming larger than humanly possible; lens shape changing. Nictitating membranes blink. He is not dead. He is TRANSFORMING.

INT. JANE'S NEWT SUIT

Jane grimaces in pain as water fills her own suit, and the increasing air pressure shrieks inside her helmet.

INT. NAMOR'S NEWT SUIT

Down and down. ECUs. CLAUSTROPHOBIC SHOTS. Depth gauge TILTS. Namor tries to hold his breath.

The relentlessly compacting pressure CRUSHES Namor's chest cavity. His body is on the verge of total collapse when --

-- WATER FORCES ITS WAY INTO HIS LUNGS. His rib cage expands, internal organs suddenly altering their structure and function. He takes a BREATH. Then another.

HIS POV: The blur of everything around Namor begins to come back into exquisite focus. Everything grows BRIGHTER, his new eyes making use of the ambient bioluminescence. Volume rises, crystallizing in a variety of oceanic SOUNDS.

EXT. ABYSS - DAY

Namor thrashes in agony. The Newt Suit WARPS at the waist, metal GROANS... and from this titanium chrysalis EXPLODES:

NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER in all his splash page glory!

His short hair is now a streamlined mane. Inner eyelids flicker, protecting his slightly over-sized eyes. LATERAL LINES, like a delicate Polynesian tattoo, spread down his neck. His body RIPPLES with Adonis-like musculature.

The Giant Squid continues on with the halves of Namor's suit, unaware it's lost its quarry. Namor flails out of control like the drowning man he thinks he is.

INT. JANE'S NEWT SUIT - DAY

Water up to her eyes, Jane gasps at the little remaining air in her helmet. Fighting blackout, she suddenly sees something else outside...

EXT. ABYSS - DAY

Namor sees it too, but far better. Illuminated by A VEIL of bioluminescent organisms, the underside of the scattering layer far above is --

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY (ESTABLISHING SHOT)

-- ATLANTIS. Its vast, miles-across bulk is of a dark, oyster-shell like accretion pitted by eons of time and the forces of the sea. Structures rise at its leading edge: huge towers and arm-like protrusions.

Beyond, through clefts in the amalgam, is a glimpse of riotous canyons, spires, promises of untold wonders... its full dimensions lost in a particle-clouded horizon which even Namor's superhuman vision can't penetrate.

The Squid Riders accelerate away with Jane. Namor tumbles after them, drawn by a powerful current into the city.

EXT. BLACK TOWER - DAY

A sleek, monolithic BLACK TOWER teeters on the rim of the CANYON PALATINE, an imposing valley of dramatic buildings on the dorsal side of Atlantis. The Giant Squids with Jane glide toward the featureless tower.

It looks like they're going to slam into it, but at the last second we see the entrance -- so black it's invisible against the building -- and they vanish into the optical illusion.

Namor, about to be swept past, catches hold of the Tower.

INT. STAR CHAMBER, BLACK TOWER - NIGHT

The chamber is water-filled. Jane and the halves of Namor's suit float in a pool of light just above an obsidian floor. There is a crackle, modulating like language as we SUBTITLE:

KRAANG (O.S.)
Were they seen?

SQUID MASTER (O.S.)
Never, my Duke.

Out of the shadows glides DUKE KRAANG. Though he almost looks human, no one would mistake him for one. His skin has a sulfuric yellow tint and his devilish short beard, on closer inspection, is a living colony of polyps.

His elaborate robe has countless pockets and folds, looks made of some half-living thing. Weary-looking, Kraang peers at Jane. She is fighting for breath in the inch or two of air left in her helmet, unaware of what's going on around her. Kraang gazes at Namor's suit.

KRAANG
Nothing more than an empty shell. Interesting. It appears to have exploded. What could possibly possess such enormous strength?

The Giant Squids hover in the b.g., their dismounted Riders restraining them with hooked hands. No answers from that corner. The SQUID MASTER, a hulking, ink-black version of the Riders drifts behind Kraang.

SQUID MASTER
Shall I preserve the other, Master?

KRAANG
Yes yes, very well.

A cylinder of clear membrane shoots down from the darkness. With a shock of pressure air blasts in, filling it in a split second, and Jane drops to the cold stone.

Jane's helmet pops off, and a rush of water pours out. She gasps in air, breath steaming. Kraang glides closer, studies her for a beat as if peering into a giant test tube, then passes through the membrane --

INT. AIR POCKET, BLACK TOWER - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

-- and steps down out of the water onto the obsidian floor. He is coated head-to-toe in slime. Slowly Jane becomes aware of him, and shocked, rolls to her side in the suit.

Kraang HISSES. It makes her recoil. Kraang lets out a tired sigh. And then he speaks. All SUBTITLES END.

KRAANG
Vu govariyu pa Russki? Bon soir -

Then Kraang sees the AMERICAN FLAG on the Newt Suit.

KRAANG
Ah. Surely you understand me now, my dear...

He steps toward her. It makes her tremble.

JANE
Yes.

KRAANG
Wonderful. Sentience is to be prized wherever it is found.

JANE
What are you?

KRAANG
Sadly, common courtesy is a far more rare jewel. What am I? As if I am some *thing*. A polite creature would ask *who* are you. In response to *that* hypothetical question, I am Duke Kraang, Strategos of the Krypteia, Speaker to the Ancient Ones, and half-brother of Emperor Thakkor.

JANE
What is this place?

KRAANG
You are in my tower in the city of Ssythsythaxia.

The word sounds like static to Jane.

KRAANG
A lovely name in Icthian, but a bit difficult in your tongue. If I'm not mistaken there are references in your literature to one of the extinct civilizations of the Lesser Sea. Yes. I believe your word *Atlantis* will do nicely...

EXT. BLACK TOWER - NIGHT

Namor clings to the Tower. He is sheer adrenaline, unable to process what has happened to him. He dares a vertigo-inducing glimpse down into the city below the tower.

A QUICK SHOT of canyons, luminous buildings, streams of creatures going to and fro as if in a dream. It makes Namor cling harder to the stone reality of the Tower.

INT. AIR POCKET, BLACK TOWER - NIGHT

Kraang glances at American flag on her shoulder.

KRAANG
Your heraldry. You are searching for your missing submarine.

JANE
The Tucson? It's here?

KRAANG
Suffice to say I have confiscated the vessel and its genocidal weapon.

JANE
Genocidal...

KRAANG
There is no need to plead ignorance. I have no intention of making you pay for the crimes of your species. I intend to make your species pay for its crimes.

Shuddering from hypothermia now, Jane manages:

JANE
The cold. It'll kill me.

KRAANG
Oh there are many things down here that will kill you.

JANE
(to herself)
Hallucinating. Nitrogen narcosis.

KRAANG
Indeed, even your own air. Luckily, as the members of the Tucson's crew can attest, I've had some success formulating a gas mixture that will preserve you, albeit in somewhat less than optimal condition. A matter of partial pressures really --

A wet, nasty COUGHING FIT cuts short his impending chemical dissertation.

KRAANG
Forgive me. While this protective slime permits me to indulge my scientific curiosity, I fear I cannot tolerate the oxygen content of your air for long, so I must make our interview brief. What happened to your colleague?

Jane shifts her unsteady gaze to the Squid Riders.

JANE
Ask them.

KRAANG
My Squid Riders? Though their ruthless efficiency is endearing, alas, their lack of a forebrain is not.

Kraang reaches into the water and gently strokes the cowl of the Squid Rider which took Namor.

CLOSE ON HIS HAND as fine, jellyfish-like stingers protrude from his fingertips. They are NEMATOCYSTS.

KRAANG
One must find hope in natural selection.

Kraang returns to Jane as the Squid Rider lets out a sudden, horrifying SHRIEK. It writhes and begins to DISINTEGRATE, the corruption spreading out from where Kraang touched it. In the space of 5 seconds it is a smear of vitrified jelly.

Its former steed, the Giant Squid, slurps it up.

It all finally overwhelms Jane, and she passes out. Kraang sighs and steps back into the water.

INT. STAR CHAMBER, BLACK TOWER - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The Squid Master moves aside for him.

KRAANG
Take her to the Krypt.

EXT. BLACK TOWER - NIGHT

Namor inches up the featureless face of the Tower. He finally reaches the top and peers over the edge.

Atop the Tower is KRAANG'S CRUISER. The gigantic craft resembles a stainless steel nautilus. A spiralling armored hull. Bridge lights in a recessed face. Shadowy figures move within giving the impression of shifting eyes.

And hanging beneath inside her gelatinous egg case is JANE. She lies unconscious, helmet at hand.

The Cruiser rises from the Tower. Namor swims after her, but his human strokes are clumsy; there's no way he's going to catch up. In pure, instinctual desperation he THROWS HIMSELF at the Cruiser, and something amazing happens:

A SKIN-TIGHT BUBBLE flashes into existence around him, and he shoots through the water. It's the beginning of what we'll come to know as Namor's SUPERCAVITATION MOVEMENT.

It's not swimming per se, but a <u>style of motion that's inhuman, beautiful, totally unlike anything we've ever seen</u>.

The burst of supercavitation carries him to the escaping Cruiser and through the wall of Jane's bubble.

INT. JANE'S BUBBLE - NIGHT

Namor seals her helmet and lifts the quarter ton suit like a rag doll. He hurls them through the bubble wall.

EXT. ABYSS - NIGHT

Namor and Jane tumble free of the Cruiser. And suddenly Jane's FACE PLATE CRACKS. Namor frantically pushes her for the surface. The crack spiderwebs across her helmet.

Namor grabs her in an embrace as if his body could somehow shield her from the crushing forces of the deep and POW --

-- her suit fails in the same instant that Namor LUNGES. His supercavitation bubble envelops both of them.

EXT. OCEAN, MIDWATER - DAY

They streak toward the surface in their sizzling comet. Shades of violet return, then blues, almost to the surface --

EXT. UNDERSEA, NEAR SURFACE - DAY

-- and then the supercavitation bubble collapses without warning. Namor loses his grip on Jane. He fumbles for her, when SUDDEN PAIN WRACKS HIS BODY. Helpless, he watches her spiral away, faceplate gone, suit flooding.

A HAND grabs Namor's hair, yanks him toward the surface. He can't see who has him, but does see the ZODIACS zipping over the surface above, NAVY DIVERS jumping over the sides.

From out of nowhere GORBY races past, grabs Jane's arm. A Diver reaches her, jams a regulator in her mouth.

EXT. ZODIAC - DAY

Namor convulses in agony on the floor of the Zodiac. Chisholm whips off his mask, shocked at the sight of Namor's white eyes, his rippling torso as internal organs involute, readjusting to low pressure.

LT. CHISHOLM
Jesus. OXYGEN!

A MEDIC passes Chisholm a mask who shoves it on Namor's face. Namor BUCKS, his head cracking the plastic floorboard, and he nearly hurls Chisholm overboard. Other Divers pile on Namor to hold him down.

LT. CHISHOLM
Radio the ship! Two critical DCI victims incoming!

INT. MRI MACHINE, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor, oxygen-masked and bound like a mummy in thermal blankets, glides slowly through a featureless white tunnel. Warm air rushing over him makes him open his eyes.

With each blink his white nictitating membranes dry, stick to his lids, and then permanently recede.

His pupils contract, eye shape slowly resolving to human proportions. The pores on his neck close, erasing all trace of the tattoo-like lateral lines.

And he finally emerges on a pallet from what we now see is an MRI machine.

INT. TRAUMA SUITE, BAR HARBOR - DAY

On the floor of a state-of-the-art shipboard trauma suite stand a pair of hyperbaric chambers. Inside one of the claustrophobic steel vessels --

INT. HYPERBARIC CHAMBER - DAY

-- Namor sits upright, disheveled, on a bench. Though catatonic-looking, he appears completely human again. Small glass observation ports, cameras and medically-equipped robotic arms line the walls.

INT. TRAUMA SUITE, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Keller, Chisholm and a Navy Doctor watch Namor and Jane on monitors. Jane lies prone, oxygen-masked, half-conscious in a separate chamber.

NAVY DOCTOR
She insists on talking to you, Sir.

The Doctor pushes a speaker button for him.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Dr. Driver, it's Keller. How're you feeling?

Jane's voice comes through, desperate, feverish-sounding.

JANE (V.O.)
Admiral. The Tucson.

ADMIRAL KELLER
No sign yet. We'll find them.

JANE (V.O.)
It's there.

ADMIRAL KELLER
The Tucson?

JANE (V.O.)
Captured. Like us.

ADMIRAL KELLER
What happened? Captured? By what?

JANE (V.O.)
Things...

She fades out, drifting into unconsciousness. Keller sees her settle back into sleep on her gurney.

INT. HYPERBARIC CHAMBER - DAY

Namor, vague, watches the dumb show through the glass --

INT. TRAUMA SUITE, BAR HARBOR - DAY

-- as Keller, Chisholm, and the Navy Doctor watch their own dumb shows on the monitors.

NAVY DOCTOR
She's been hallucinating along that line for the last few hours.

ADMIRAL KELLER
How is she otherwise?

NAVY DOCTOR
About as expected. Hypothermia. Elevated blood gasses, confusion, sinus damage. Miracle she didn't get an embolism.
(beat)
The real question is how is *he* doing.

He gestures to Namor sitting upright in the chamber.

LT. CHISHOLM
Eight hours ago he looked like a frog in a microwave.

NAVY DOCTOR
And that's no joke. MRI showed massive tissue damage, internal injuries. Lungs had ten times normal surface area, like they had turned inside out and exploded. It's possible a seizure messed up the imagery. But then his bloodwork... It was almost normal. The gas levels should have been off the charts like hers. Worse even, given how he presented.

LT. CHISHOLM
Admiral, if you saw him...
(beat, edge of warning)
It's just not right that he's sitting in there like that.

Keller studies Namor.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Has he said anything about what happened?

NAVY DOCTOR
Not a word. He looks catatonic, but I don't think he is. More likely post-traumatic stress.

ADMIRAL KELLER
So you could let him out of there.

ON THE IMAGE of Namor staring directly out at them.

NAVY DOCTOR
If this whole thing didn't make me so nervous, I could.

INT. JANE'S HYPERBARIC CHAMBER - NIGHT

With a hiss, a hyperbaric chamber opens revealing Jane. She looks up, blinking at the Doctor and his ORDERLIES.

NAVY DOCTOR
Feeling better?

INT. TRAUMA SUITE, BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Though weak, Jane emerges from the chamber under her own power. She takes in the surroundings, spots Namor's chamber. She begins moving toward it, afraid of what she might see.

NAVY DOCTOR
Ma'am...

The Orderlies try to guide her away, but she pulls free, goes to the port, and there --

INT. HYPERBARIC CHAMBER - NIGHT

-- is Namor. In an instant his vague stare is gone, and he jumps up.

NAMOR
Jane! Jane!

Her lips move, but he can't hear anything. She looks him up and down, mind trying to reconcile her memory with the evidence of her eyes. Then she smiles, eyes welling up.

NAMOR
Are you okay?

She nods yes. Mouths 'are you?' He nods. She presses her hand to his, the glass separating them, then finally lets the Doctor lead her off. Namor watches, relieved, some part of his old self returning.

He goes to a speaker box on the wall, toggles the switch.

NAMOR
Hey! Is anybody out there? Hey!

A long beat. And then finally a voice pipes in:

LT. CHISHOLM (V.O.)
Hey, Tin Can. I was starting to think you lost your few remaining marbles there, hombre.

Namor looks out, sees Chisholm at the nurse's station.

NAMOR
Bert.
(resigned to diplomacy)
I'm feeling pretty good. Is someone there to let me out too?

LT. CHISHOLM (V.O.)
Doc's taking your girlfriend upstairs. He'll be back.

NAMOR
And then they'll let me out.

LT. CHISHOLM (V.O.)
Thought I heard something about more tests.

NAMOR
But I can do them out there, right?

Chisholm chuckles, tries to seem relaxed.

LT. CHISHOLM (V.O.)
Don't know. Might not be safe, man.

NAMOR
I've been decompressing as long as she has.

LT. CHISHOLM (V.O.)
(beat, firm)
It might not be safe.

It makes Namor pause. Something's not right.

NAMOR
For who?

LT. CHISHOLM (V.O.)
(beat)
For you. Who else would I be talking about?

But it hangs there, Namor hearing the tension in his voice.

INT. ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Jane sits in a wheelchair in the Admiral's study. Lost in the details of mundane items, personal effects, the hum of a fax, comforting relics of rational, everyday life.

ADMIRAL KELLER (OC)
(interrupting her reverie)
Doctor Driver?

Jane shifts her gaze to him.

ADMIRAL KELLER
So you didn't actually see the Tucson?

JANE
No.

ADMIRAL KELLER
What did you see?

She blinks, her face giving away emotion. And she decides:

JANE
I'm not sure. Guess I just need time to sort it out.

ADMIRAL KELLER
There was a word you used earlier. You said the Tucson was captured. What did you mean?

That makes her focus. She just stares at him.

JANE
I don't know. I can't remember.

But she does remember. And Keller sees it.

INT. WELL DECK, BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Jane climbs down the ladder, pauses above the water. Gorby comes up, chirps happily. She strokes his skin --

-- and runs her fingers over raw SCARS. Sucker marks from a fight with Giant Squid. She wasn't imagining everything.

INT. TRAUMA SUITE, BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

The Suite is quiet, only a single Orderly on duty. Jane goes to Namor's chamber, picks up a phone on it.

INT. HYPERBARIC CHAMBER - NIGHT

Namor sees her, goes to the port.

JANE (V.O.)
How are you?

NAMOR
They won't let me out, they keep sticking me with needles, and I have a new appreciation for chemical toilets. How are you?

JANE (V.O.)
What happened to us?

NAMOR
I was hoping you'd tell me.

She's unsure, feeling her way through this.

JANE (V.O.)
We saw something, right?

NAMOR
I assume you're talking about the city which the guys riding the squids took us to. Or do you mean the jumbo-jet-sized metal shellfish?

JANE (V.O.)
We were hallucinating. Nitrogen narcosis. After our suits failed --

Namor can't believe he's hearing this, and angry:

NAMOR
-- After *my* suit failed, *I* began breathing water! *They* have the sub, Jane! Whoever *they* are.

Jane turns away, almost hangs up the phone, but doesn't. She turns back, has a grip on it now. She looks at him.

JANE (V.O.)
Kraang... That was his name.

Namor softens.

NAMOR
Okay. So what have you told Keller?

JANE
Nothing.

NAMOR
What have you told him about me?

JANE (V.O.)
Nothing.
(beat, awed)
I saw your suit implode. You shouldn't be here.

NAMOR
And I shouldn't be able to breathe water. And I shouldn't be able to swim a hundred miles an hour. And I shouldn't be able to toss around a quarter-ton Newt Suit like I would an old jacket.
(beat)
Are you afraid of me now too?

JANE
No.

NAMOR
Then you're the only one on this ship who isn't.

JANE
I'll get them to let you out.

NAMOR
They won't. Not until they've assessed every threat. Not until they have an explanation. That's how these people work.
(beat)
You have to tell Keller what we saw.

JANE
No I don't. All I have to do is get him to look for himself.

EXT. UNDERSEA, MID WATER - DAY

A half dozen REMOTELY OPERATED VEHICLES dangle like pendants from the Bar Harbor far above. They turn from side to side, floodlights illuminating the darkness.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Empty monitors show black void all around. Jane glances over. Expectant faces on everyone.

JANE
We impacted on some kind of structure. Geological - wreck - I don't know.

OPERATOR
Median depth under keel 9000 meters. ROV alpha approaching bottom.

Everyone turns to the one ROV's screen. Blackness. Lights seem to reflect off something, and then out of the gloom appears MUD BOTTOM. One by one the other ROV screen resolve into empty gray plains as far as their lights will shine.

Jane looks helplessly to Admiral Keller.

INT. HYPERBARIC CHAMBER - NIGHT

JANE (V.O.)
Maybe we didn't see what we --

NAMOR
-- you know what we saw!

He pounds the side of the chamber. Then thinks, decides...

NAMOR
That sub is down there. I have to get out of here.

JANE (V.O.)
And then what? Go back down? In what?

He just stares at her, determined. He's not planning on using any suit.

JANE (V.O.)
You *are* crazy.

NAMOR
You said you wouldn't use the suit I fixed. But you did. Why?

Jane hesitates.

JANE (V.O.)
I wanted you to know I trusted you.

Namor stares her down. She hangs up the phone.

NAMOR
(resigned, to himself)
And I almost got you killed.

CLUNK-HISS! The chamber hatch opens.

JANE
I still do. Go get them.

INT. TRAUMA SUITE, BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Namor makes a break for it.

NAVY DOCTOR
STOP!
(picking up phone)
Security! Patient's out of control!

Namor foot-races the Orderlies to the door out of the suite. Jane steps in front of the Orderlies, getting bowled over, but trips them in the process.

Namor throws open a hatch and springs out into a PITCHING PASSAGEWAY. The Trauma Suite is on gimbals to isolate it from the ship's movement. The false step throws him, and the Orderlies catch up, pile on, knocking him to the floor.

The Doctor grabs a needle and sedative vial.

INT. PASSAGEWAY, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Namor wrestles with the Orderlies. He sees the Doctor stalking toward him, prepping his hypo. It's inspiration, and he breaks free of the Orderlies into the ship's passageway.

Standing there is Chisholm, a FIRE HOSE in hand. He cranks it, and a BLAST OF SEAWATER slams Namor off his feet.

The water hammers Namor at hundreds of PSI. Chisholm advances, blasting Namor from one side of the passage to the other like a hockey player moving down the rink with a puck. It's brutal.

In the violence of the spray, it's hard to see what's happening to Namor, but his head impacts a hatch step and we get a --

-- CLOSE UP of NAMOR'S WHITE EYES. Then the hose dislodges him, sweeping him on.

The Doctor and Jane emerge from the suite. Jane sees what's happening.

JANE
Stop!

But she's restrained by the amused Orderlies. Chisholm is having fun. He spots an open stairway.

LT. CHISHOLM
He shoots! He scores!

And with that, he blasts Namor over the edge and down the stairwell to the next deck. Chisholm moves to the top step, continues training the ferocious torrent down on --

INT. BOTTOM OF STAIRS, BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

-- Namor who lies crumpled on the floor, pinned against a bulkhead under the intense stream. TRANSFORMING.

INT. PASSAGEWAY, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

The Doctor comes up. Chisholm cuts off the hose.

LT. CHISHOLM
Looks like you wash out again,
Tin Can.

The Doctor descends the stairs to --

INT. BOTTOM OF STAIRS, BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

-- Namor. The Doctor stabs the hypo into Namor's arm, BREAKING THE NEEDLE. Namor's hand suddenly locks around the Doctor's. Namor flings him across the hall, snaps to his feet like a wrestler and --

INT. PASSAGEWAY, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

-- springs to the top of the stairs right in Chisholm's face. Chisholm looks into the rage-white eyes of a monster. And then Namor SNARLS.

It's an inhuman rattle of echolocation, vaguely like Kraang's speech but much deeper, its threatening intent obvious.

LT. CHISHOLM
Oh shit.

Namor whips him up by the collar and takes off running.

INT. VARIOUS PASSAGES, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

Namor moves through the ship, kicking steel hatches off their hinges, springing down stairs. Every stride leaves heel-strikes in the deck, propels Namor twice what it should.

Marines try to intercept him. He eludes the ones he can, bowls over the ones he can't. A Marine pulls an ALARM.

INT. ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

And a SIREN howls through the ship. Keller grabs his jacket as he emerges, meeting the Captain.

P.A. (V.O.)
Intruder on C deck! He has a hostage! He is moving aft toward the well deck! This is no drill!

INT. WELL DECK - NIGHT

Namor bursts onto the deck with Chisholm. It's crowded with burly Navy Divers, Chisholm's men. They stare in shock. They're standing between him and the rear of the ship. Namor glances at Chisholm.

NAMOR
Figured you might come in handy.

LT. CHISHOLM
You think I'll order them to let you go?

NAMOR
Not exactly.

With that he flips Chisholm, catches him by the ankle. WHAM! Namor wades into the Navy Divers, thrashing them with Chisholm, wielding him like a human flail.

Out of hatches everywhere rush armed Marines. Admiral Keller and Jane come through a hatch on an upper level.

Namor finally drops the thoroughly-beaten Chisholm, alive, his hip dislocated. He looks to Jane. Marine guards are pinning her to the floor, gun to her head, cinching plastic cuffs around her wrists.

Namor starts for her, stops himself. He turns to Keller. Who is SHOCKED.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Jesus H.
(beat, to Namor)
What are you? What do you want?

NAMOR
The same thing you do.

An infuriated shout from Chisholm, and Namor pitches forward slightly. Chisholm holds a serrated DIVE KNIFE. There's blood on it. It's from:

A SLASH WOUND across the backs of Namor's legs where Chisholm tried to hamstring him. Under the skin is an IMPENETRABLE LAYER OF SILVER MUSCLE.

Namor stomps Chisholm's knife hand, breaking it, and before the hotheads starts shooting, he springs into the air --

INT. UNDERWATER, WELL DECK - NIGHT

-- and plunges into the well. Bullets zip into the water all around him.

INT. WELL DECK - NIGHT

Marines rush to the edge, bursts of automatic rifle fire kicking up water.

JANE
Don't! The animals!

ADMIRAL KELLER
Cease fire!

INT. UNDERWATER, WELL DECK - NIGHT

Namor takes in breaths of water, feels the cuts on his legs. They are HEALING in front of our eyes. He turns to the sea gate, and with a supercavitating burst, accelerates from zero to sixty in about fifty feet. WHANG!

INT. WELL DECK - NIGHT

The entire deck shudders. The ramp collapses letting the ocean in, letting Namor out. A pair of Divers rush to Chisholm's aid.

LT. CHISHOLM
Get the fliers.

EXT. OCEAN, NEAR SURFACE - NIGHT

Namor swims free of the ship, decelerates from supercav speed, begins to descend with long, powerful strokes that propel him much farther than any human stroke could.

And then the FLIERS loom out of the darkness behind. They're sleek, one-man armed submarines.

INT. FLIER - NIGHT

Chisholm pilots the lead. He activates small torpedoes under the Flier's wings.

LT. CHISHOLM
Set for proximity.

EXT. OCEAN, MIDWATER - NIGHT

Torpedoes streak after Namor. One passes within ten feet of him and EXPLODES, jolting him hard.

The ocean buffets Namor, waves of increasing pressure rippling over his body, slowing him momentarily. But each time he drives on, seemingly possessed of new strength.

INT. FLIER - NIGHT

Chisholm jams his joystick DOWN. CREAKING SOUNDS roll through the Flier's hull.

NAVY DIVER #1 (V.O.)
Lieutenant! We're at 1000 meters! We've got to pull up!

EXT. MIDWATER - NIGHT

Namor passes a final invisible barrier of pressure, and there his body undergoes one last spasm. But he's getting used to it, and he turns to confront his pursuer.

INT. FLIER - NIGHT

Chisholm's lights trap Namor.

LT. CHISHOLM
There you are, you freak.

He FIRES. Nothing happens. And then there's a loud GROAN from the hull. He looks out his window.

EXT. MIDWATER - NIGHT

The torpedoes are CRUSHED like empty cigar tubes. One of the Flier's lights implodes and goes out. Then another.

Namor approaches, sees Chisholm inside try to drop ballast. But as the sub's engine compartment fails and breaks away, the pilot's pressure sphere drops out of its chassis.

Namor lunges to save Chisholm but --

INT. FLIER - NIGHT

LT. CHISHOLM
Like a tin can...

EXT. MIDWATER - NIGHT

-- the Flier IMPLODES. Namor stops in horror, watches the machine crumple to a third its size, the bubble cloud ascend, and the remnants fall away into the abyss...

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - NIGHT

A massive SPIKE appears on waterfall screens in the dive ops room. Sonar Operators whip their headphones off in unison as the BOOM of the implosion registers with the still-shocked crew of the Bar Harbor...

...and the now deadly-grim Keller.

EXT. ABYSS - NIGHT

Namor soars over the bottom. It is endless plain faintly lit by a starlight of bioluminescent creatures. But his superior eyes can see:

A vast highway, a flattened plain within the plain. On the horizon a cloud of silt. He sets out after it.

EXT. ATLANTIS UNDERCITY - NIGHT

A towering cloud of silt, like a Saharan sandstorm rises over the ocean floor. Namor presses through it...

...and there is ATLANTIS. And now we understand why nobody can find it:

<u>It's a city that moves</u>, driven on across the abyssal wastelands by deep sea currents.

Vast CAVERNS OF AIR in its underside provide buoyancy for the miles of structures and amalgam that constitute the city itself.

It glides a thousand feet over the ocean floor, ventral spires, domes, forests of sea-flora clinging to its underside.

THOUSANDS OF CREATURES -- countless varieties, but too far away to make out much detail -- come and go from the seafloor where they gather food and resources. Plumes of sediment rise from their activity.

He sees a white dolphin streak by. He watches it go up to a reflective silver disk in the belly of the city and --

-- SHAKK!!! A STINGWHIP lashes across Namor's back, its blistering agents nearly immobilizing him with pain.

And out of the murk around him appear SLAVE DRIVERS. They're smooth, heavily muscled humanoids; their catfish moustaches giving them a Turkish, harem-guard appearance.

SLAVE DRIVER
Trying to sneak off, slave?

They drag him toward the air pocket where the dolphin went.

SLAVE DRIVER
Try again, and the Mistress will eat your liver for dinner.

INT. SLAVEHOLD - NIGHT

Namor is flung bodily from the water into AIR. He lands on a rocky shore at the edge of an entry pool. It's at the center of an enormous irregular, air-filled cavern.

He gets up and looks around in astonishment. Bioluminescent growth on the ceiling casts a weak sunlight over a mist-shrouded shoreline crammed with thousands of SLAVES.

It's as if the train of mammalian evolution lost a car, and it ended up at the bottom of this sunless ravine. The Slaves come in a score of varieties, various heights and sizes.

Those on shore walk upright, are vaguely humanoid. Those in the water look more like ordinary marine mammals -- whales, dolphins -- except for rampant albinism, oversized eyes and other adaptations to abyssal life.

But they all have one thing in common: they breathe AIR.

NAMOR stands on the shore, filled with wonder, a Darwin on some new Galapagos.

He listens to the honking, clattering slave voices.

Many are high-pitched like children. Others impossibly deep like fog horns. Some are intelligible, others are emotionally-inflected but nonsensical like baby talk. Namor opens his mouth, his own deep clatter becoming a mystified:

NAMOR
I can understand them...

He starts toward a group of fairly harmless-looking OBESE SLAVES shucking clams by an enormous midden of shells, but doesn't get there as --

-- WHAM! With a shock we feel in the seats, the ton-and-a-half BULL, beaches right behind Namor. His voice is a deep, basso thunder.

BULL
SKINNY GET AWAY! BULL'S FEMALES!

Bull rises on his hindquarters to his full 12-foot height, bares huge canines. Namor raises his hands in surrender --

NAMOR
Okay! Okay!

-- but to Bull it's an aggression display. He roars, inflating his nose sack.

BULL
BULL SMASH SKINNY LIKE CLAM!

He kicks Namor high into the air. Namor lands hard. Bull advances, threatening.

NAMOR
Relax, pal! The blubber doesn't do it for me!

It provokes Bull to the absolute height of jealous rage, and he hurls himself with startling agility --

BULL
RAAAAAAWWWW!!! LUSCIOUS BLUBBER!

-- body-slamming Namor into a pile of shells, burying him under his own ample mass. The female slaves coo in delight. Bull flips up to inspect his handiwork. And there is NAMOR, stunned, but alive.

Bull can't believe it, but before he can do anything Namor scrambles out of the way. Bull goes after him, slamming onlookers aside, spawning fights all the way down the beach.

NAMOR
They're yours, Bull!
(head fake)
Hey, what's that guy doing to her!?

Bull ROARS and turns on the nearest, biggest bystander.

The slavehold is bedlam. Trying to find a safe place, Namor looks to the water just as --

-- a churning WATERSPOUT erupts. Atop it rides the AQUASAUCER which is generating it. And out of the crown of spray like a sci-fi *Birth of Venus* appears:

COUNTESS ILA, fair, cold, a timelessly young deep-sea diva. Her skin has a faint silver undertone and her eyes are slightly larger than a human's -- an alluring effect which gives her a misleading sense of innocence.

Except for these features, she could pass as human. She is an ICTHYID, a member of the Atlantian ruling caste.

COUNTESS ILA
Perhaps I shall flood this slavehold and end my problems with it once and for all.

The fighting dies down. Bored, and just pouty enough, she looks at the Slaves.

COUNTESS ILA
The only thing Emperor Thakkor loathes more than a riot is a production shortfall. Don't you see, such rowdy behavior makes your Mistress -
(beat, painful to say)
-look bad. Think about this while you take part in the Emperor's hunt.

PANIC. The Slaves flee, sweeping Namor up with them. Ila lets out a long, MUSICAL CALL. Every Slave in the cavern, including Namor, stops. Namor tries to fathom what just happened to him.

And then Ila's call becomes a SIREN SONG. The Slaves ripple toward her like a stadium wave. Namor tries to fight against the crush of half-hypnotized creatures.

EXT. OCEAN, BENEATH ATLANTIS - DAY

But he is swept into the water, plunging into a ring of SHARK LEGIONNAIRES mounted on GREAT WHITE SHARKS.

The Legionnaires are Icthyids with dull black eyes, pointed faces and teeth. They carry lances, wear swept-back helmets and sharkskin armor. Sharks gnash at the edges of the herd, driving it toward:

THE IMPERIAL HOWDAH. Two ALBINO SPERM WHALES yoked beneath propel the majestic vehicle. Bioluminescent lanterns illuminate its baroque upper half where the Emperor and his COURT ride. Namor stares in awe.

Vast numbers of Legionnaires, MANTA HANDLERS with HUNTING MANTAS, and other servants escort it. Like a giant school of fish, the entire train turns as one away from Atlantis.

INT. IMPERIAL HOWDAH - DAY

Namor comes up in the air pocket under the Howdah next to Bull. It is crammed with slaves. Oxygen-producing algae hangs in wet strings overhead.

NAMOR
Where are they taking us?

BULL
We find prey for Emperor, or Fish Men hunt us instead.

The Slaves in the air pocket submerge as one, making room for others. Namor follows.

EXT. IMPERIAL HOWDAH - DAY

Namor eyes the Shark Legionnaires escorting them. Beyond is the Imperial Howdah. Namor sees:

EMPEROR THAKKOR relishing the scene. Streams of lanterns staggering off into darkness, baying animals... it's a wild Celtic chase in an ancient forest.

THAKKOR
21 years since I've hunted these waters. The eternal currents carry us 'round too slowly...

COUNTESS ILA (O.C.)
Such a romantic, Uncle.

Thakkor turns to Ila. He's a very human-looking Icthyid. His eyes twinkle with wily intelligence.

THAKKOR
You should have seen me two hundred years ago, eh Kraang?

Ill-looking, Kraang sways back and forth with the Howdah's motion.

KRAANG
A veritable cuttlefish.

COURTIERS laugh around them. They're Icthyids of various ranks and skin patterns.

THAKKOR
Poor Ila, why do you indulge me so?

COUNTESS ILA
It does you good when you hunt,
and I like to see you this way.

She pecks Thakkor on the cheek, amplifying Kraang's nausea.

THAKKOR
And you, my half-brother?

KRAANG
I dare not leave you alone with
such... youthful counsel.

Ila and Kraang studiously ignore each other: they're arch-rivals. Thakkor lets out a booming laugh, fond of both.

THAKKOR
What would I do without you two?

KRAANG
Run the city to ruin, no doubt.

PRAETORIAN SHANK approaches, military-looking, pompous.

PRAETORIAN SHANK
Most Imperial Majesty, we have
located prey.

EXT. ABYSS - DAY

HORNS SOUND. Slaves drive fish into a vast, swirling SCHOOL. It's no mere bait-ball, but a living hurricane, the sea at its richest. Namor does his best to keep up with Bull. There's a SHOUT, and he ducks as --

-- Thakkor swoops by, trident in hand. He hangs suspended from a remora harness beneath a giant MANTA. Other hunters follow him. They fly into the school, spear fish, and pirouette out of the way.

Namor looks around, desperate to use the chaos to escape. Below is a rugged cold-water reef riven with hiding places.

EXT. COLD WATER REEF - DAY

He ducks behind a formation and looks back toward Atlantis. But there are Shark Legionnaires hovering in the offing. Namor backs into a maze of Gorgonians just before they spot him. They pass.

Namor doesn't see the GIANT ELECTRIC EEL rear up behind him.

CRACK! A stroke of electricity stuns Namor. The 40-foot eel bites him, flips him up to swallow, but at the apex of its move a TRIDENT shunks into its neck. It's Thakkor.

Namor's momentum sends him tumbling up into the water column above what is now a FIGHT.

The eel whirls on Thakkor in fury. Thakkor moves like a bullfighter, dodging and stabbing. Other hunters detach from their mantas, drop into the fray.

Namor recovers, realizes he's caught between the fight and a huge ring of spectators which have encircled the reef.

EXT. IMPERIAL HOWDAH - DAY

Kraang and Ila watch from the Howdah, hovering like a grandstand over a stadium. The eel narrowly misses catching Thakkor. The spectators CHEER. Kraang sighs.

KRAANG
Have your assassins ever gotten that close to our beloved Emperor?

COUNTESS ILA
I don't believe so. Have yours?

KRAANG
Not nearly. I doubt anyone's have.

The spectators CHEER again for Thakkor. A little bitter:

COUNTESS ILA
He certainly loves reminding us of his vitality.

EXT. COLD WATER REEF - DAY

The giant eel bites off lances, writhes through the Gorgonian maze, using its twists and turns to trap the Hunters one by one and devour them.

Namor watches, paralyzed by the horrific sight of a hunter swallowed whole.

Thakkor wounds the eel again, but with a powerful twist the monster tears the trident from Thakkor's grip, flings him to the reef.

Stunned, Thakkor gropes for his trident, but then sees it embedded in the eel's flank. A GASP goes up from the spectators as the eel turns on the defenseless Thakkor.

The nearest Shark Legionnaires streak in to protect him, but a corona of ELECTRICITY erupts from the eel, arcing from one Legionnaire to another, stunning and killing them.

The eel sways toward Thakkor, menacing, lightning crackling. Thakkor sees --

-- NOBODY COMING TO HELP HIM. The other hunter/courtiers hang there. Praetorian Shank is the closest, mounted on his Great White. Not even making a move.

ON THAKKOR, a beat of understanding. Then resignation.

Namor sees what's about to happen, and on sheer impulse, LAUNCHES HIMSELF THROUGH THE WATER. His IMPACT drives the eel down. The eel recoils and lashes back, jaws locking down on Namor's thigh.

Namor's inner eyelids flash down in rage, and a lifetime of instinct on land takes over. He throws a HAYMAKER.

Human fists don't move like this in water. It's so fast the supercavitating vacuum flashes into existence around his hand like a silver hammer, and the collapsing bubble punctuates the blow with a thunderclap -- pa- POW!

EXT. IMPERIAL HOWDAH - DAY

Kraang grips the rail of the Howdah, stares at Namor. Ila looks in astonishment to Kraang.

EXT. COLD WATER REEF - DAY

Namor's fury is superhuman. Strokes of electricity erupt about them. The eel thrashes -- its sawteeth should have his leg off by now -- but Namor's blows are like depth charges.

He hammers the eel's skull until it's a misshapen bag. It finally releases him, begins to settle to the bottom.

Namor turns to Thakkor, exhausted, wary, but before he can say anything, the eel's corpse discharges its remaining energy in a titanic FLASH --

-- which SMASH CUTS NAMOR TO BLACK.

INT. STAR CHAMBER, BLACK TOWER - DAY

FADE IN ON: Namor, floating prone and unconscious in the center of the Star Chamber. Thakkor and Kraang study him.

THAKKOR
What is he?

KRAANG
Your Majesty, if you will permit me to study him, in time I --

THAKKOR
What is he, Kraang!?

Kraang remains calm, applies a private tone.

KRAANG
Majesty...

Thakkor gets the hint, dismisses the Shark Legionnaires hanging in the b.g. The Squid Master remains. Kraang begins to pace, off guard, calculating as fast as it can.

KRAANG
Dear brother, I think you know what this creature is.

THAKKOR
Don't play games with me.

KRAANG
Then I ask you to rescind the order you gave me when you took the throne three centuries ago.

THAKKOR
You'll have to refresh my memory.

KRAANG
As I recall, you said, 'Kraang, I don't want to know about things from beyond the sea, if there even is such a place. All I --

THAKKOR
(remembering)
-- all I want is to keep Atlantis true to its eternal ways. That is work enough for an Emperor.'

Kraang stares at Namor; Thakkor doesn't see his loathing.

KRAANG
Throughout our history there have been inexplicable sightings, strange artifacts, disturbances: evidence of a world beyond the oceans. A world above the ocean.

THAKKOR
The pressure is too low. How could anything survive up there?

KRAANG
Yet it appears they do. My Krypteia has preserved your peace of mind, the peace of the subjects, and the timeless order of the city for 300 years. Under my guidance we have reduced the number of encounters. But every year the task becomes harder, and things are seen, are heard by too many to simply explain away.

THAKKOR
Fifty years ago. The Great Boiling Storms...

KRAANG
Weapons, my Lord. Weapons too terrible to contemplate.

Thakkor looks at him, takes it in. Turns to Namor.

THAKKOR
This world above the sea. What is it like? What are *they* like?

Kraang gestures to the Squid Master who touches what looks like a waving frond of fiberoptic controls, and a variety of NICHES in the wall become transparent. INSIDE ARE:

A VARIETY OF HUMAN ARTIFACTS: spare tires. A miles-long fishing line barbed with vicious hooks. A stack of 55-gallon drums with hazardous material markings...

KRAANG
Their world is a world of air. Their civilization, if you wish to call it that, spreads like a reef-plague; its virulence matched only by its determination to despoil the ocean. My agents recovered these items from the city's path in the last day alone.

Thakkor looks at Namor's shattered Newt Suit.

THAKKOR
Incredible...

KRAANG
A better word is apocalyptic.

Thakkor turns to him.

KRAANG
Perhaps you remember the outbreak of mysterious tumors in the slaveholds last year. And no doubt you have noticed the great barren stretches of sea where once you hunted game.
(beat)
Make no mistake, my Lord. There will come a point, and soon, when we must choose which of our civilizations will survive.

THAKKOR
You mean war. And you were going to tell me this when?

KRAANG
When I had a solution. Why cause consternation otherwise?

THAKKOR
And do you have one?

Kraang paces away, considering. Then, acting as if it's some new insight:

KRAANG
We must go to the Hidden City and seek alliance with the Ancient Ones.

The thought is clearly off-putting to Thakkor.

THAKKOR
Those dirty people. Their volcanic factories are dying out, they cannot leave the confines of their city... They're on the verge of extinction! What help could they possibly offer us?

KRAANG
They have seen countless species come and go. They may have anticipated this threat from above and may have an answer.

Thakkor turns back to Namor.

THAKKOR
And what about them? What do these creatures know about us?

KRAANG
Our nomadic movements have long prevented our discovery. But it cannot last forever.

Thakkor sees Namor slowly regaining consciousness.

THAKKOR
Are you from... Above?

Namor manages a weak nod.

KRAANG
By your leave, Majesty, I will keep the creature in my custody and personally see to the most rigorous of interrogations.

Thakkor glances at Kraang, hesitates. Turns to Namor.

THAKKOR
Why did you save me?

NAMOR
You'd have died.

THAKKOR
I was too slow. I *should* have died. It is the nature of things.

NAMOR
Shouldn't be...

It affects Thakkor, confuses him. He hesitates. Praetorian Shank suddenly enters escorting Ila.

COUNTESS ILA
Ah, there you are, Uncle.
(glancing at Namor)
As it appears my slave has recovered, I will return him to his slavehold.

Kraang tries not to appear alarmed. Shares a look with Thakkor. Ila sees it.

COUNTESS ILA
Or if you prefer, I will have him wait on me in your court.

KRAANG
Your Majesty, I had best retain --

COUNTESS ILA
-- he is MINE.

She's adamant. Thakkor looks from her to Kraang, torn.

THAKKOR
Take him, Ila.

Legionnaires come, remove Namor, follow Ila out.

KRAANG
This will prove to be a grievous mistake. You should have left him for me to question.

THAKKOR
Perhaps. But I have questions of my own.

INT. STAR CHAMBER, BLACK TOWER - DAY (LATER)

Kraang peers down into the Canyon Palatine through a one-way window. He watches Thakkor and his escort depart.

KRAANG
I had hoped to disclose the existence of the Earthmen in a different manner. But this untimely revelation may prove a priceless opportunity.

SQUID MASTER
My Duke?

KRAANG
If Thakkor comes to believe the humans are a threat, he will go to the Ancient Ones of his own free will. He will never expect that we plan to betray him.
(beat)
Send word to the Krypt. They must make the Tucson's weapon operational by the time we reach the Hidden City. And allow the humans to pick up our scent.

INT. AQUASAUCER - DAY

Namor stands in the AQUASAUCER between two Slave Drivers. Ila lounges in a cocoon settee, jaded-looking, eyeing Namor's physique.

Drive blades whir along the saucer's edge like mechanical cilia, carrying them into the yawning --

EXT. CANYON PALATINE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

-- Canyon Palatine, the heart of the upper city of Atlantis. The water clarity is spectacular, unlike the industrial murk of the undercity.

Geometrical structures fringe the upper reaches of the canyon. Some are well on their way to being absorbed in the city's foundation of shell-like accretion, leaving only the faces of the buildings visible as they descend.

The geometric structures give way to older layers and more bizarre architectural styles. It is a city with history.

Icthyids of countless varieties fly on currents among the luminous buildings. There are no air spaces; it is the part of the city for water-breathers. Namor tries hard to conceal his awe.

COUNTESS ILA
A brave face, but you haven't seen the upper city before, have you?

NAMOR
I'm a slave. I don't get out much.

COUNTESS ILA
And do you have a name, slave?

NAMOR
Nix.

She looks him over... and likes what she sees.

COUNTESS ILA
Why haven't I noticed you before, Nix? You... stand out.

NAMOR
So do you.

She smiles, her vanity fully-stroked, but not fooled.

COUNTESS ILA
I think your flattery is insincere. And you didn't answer my question.

NAMOR
Why did you take me from Kraang?

COUNTESS ILA
You're something of a celebrity. *My* celebrity.

He turns, and comes face-to-face with the IMPERIAL PALACE, glorious and forbidding, rising from the bottom.

COUNTESS ILA
Just think of the Imperial Palace as a very clean, very deadly slavehold.

INT. GREAT HALL, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Like some vast, petrified umbilicus, a twisted PILLAR OF CORAL rises from the floor of the palace's enormous, spherical great hall. Glowing lanterns, platforms and guards orbit at various inclinations.

Atop the pillar is a flat DAIS, hanging over which is the IMPERIAL TASTER. Its hundreds of jellyfish tentacles offer dainties from the eel which it is cooking in the chemical stew of its transparent gut.

The court sits in Atlantian chairs, delicate sprays of spokes designed to anchor the individual in zero-g. The pulsating round table which they sit at is, in fact, a huge holothurian.

Thakkor broods in the golden arms of the OCTOPUS THRONE. He discards a bone, and the table sucks it up.

Everyone is staring at Namor. He shifts uncomfortably in a chair, ignoring the Taster which offers him one part of the eel after another. Shank's resentment is palpable.

PRAETORIAN SHANK
It is rude to refuse the Emperor's hospitality.

NAMOR
I'm not hungry.

The Taster offers Kraang a morsel. Kraang brushes it off, then grudgingly accepts an EYEBALL, watches the exchange.

PRAETORIAN SHANK
A slave who isn't hungry? A slave who breathes water like an Icthyid? What kind of slave are you?

Namor just glares.

THAKKOR
Tell them, Kraang.

KRAANG
You explain so well, my Lord. I'm sure I'd leave something out.

THAKKOR
He is from a small band of exiles, the descendant of escaped slaves. He is unfamiliar with our customs.

The court MURMURS in curiosity, a little scandal. Namor watches as they mostly buy it, distracted by the appalling idea of escaped slaves.

PRAETORIAN SHANK
Ah. It makes one wonder what other creatures live out there in the --

Shank GAGS. Thakkor turns a withering stare on him.

THAKKOR
Good eel, don't you think?

Shank suddenly rises from his chair, clutches his throat in agony. He looks up at the Imperial Taster. Poisoned.

THAKKOR
It would taste better had you killed it yourself.

Namor watches in horror as Shank dies. A beat of silence around the table. But it's not shock. It's nonchalance.

COUNTESS ILA
What a relief. He was such a boor.

THAKKOR
It was his duty to defend me, and he failed.

Kraang finishes off the eyeball.

KRAANG
A traitor, certainly, intent on your life. I blush to think what promises the Countess must have made him.

COUNTESS ILA
Don't think my uncle doesn't know about your mind-control methods, Kraang --

KRAANG
-- hah! Mind control, madame! I am but an amateur compared to you!

THAKKOR
Enough! Baron Yaw, you are my new Praetorian. Remember that my Shark Legion is led by example.

A minor noble, BARON YAW, rises and bows, gracious.

BARON YAW
Of course, Majesty.

Namor sits there horrified like a stranger caught in the middle of a Capone Thanksgiving. Thakkor looks from one face to another, wrestles with his emotions.

THAKKOR
We are family. We should be able to count on each other. The time is coming when we must be able...

He trails off. Kraang and Ila share a glance. Other petty rivals exchange 'Is he serious?' looks. Thakkor sees them unable to grasp his appeal.

THAKKOR
... As you can see, I am indisposed. Leave me.
(beat, to Namor)
Except you.

There's an indignant murmur, and Namor bears the brunt of it. But Thakkor stares them to silence. The court reluctantly empties out. Alone now, Thakkor and Namor take each other's measure.

The Octopus Throne suddenly RISES. Its lower half, previously unseen, is ORGANIC. It unfolds its tentacles, glides closer, giving Thakkor a better view of Namor.

THAKKOR
If you're a spy, then you've just seen our greatest weakness.

NAMOR
I'm no spy. And where I'm from, families have problems too.

THAKKOR
I should have fallen to some great beast in the midst of a glorious hunt years ago, and my daughter Fen should be Empress now. There wasn't a soul in the city who didn't love her. Or so I thought. Do you know how much it hurts when you don't trust your family?

Namor glances at the portal where the court exited.

NAMOR
They killed her?

THAKKOR
In Atlantis the strong survive. The ruthless prosper. The merciless rule. And she didn't know how to be merciless.

NAMOR
I'm sorry for you, but I didn't come here to swap sob stories.

Thakkor flashes with ANGER, and the Octopus Throne whips a tentacle around Namor's neck in response.

THAKKOR
I loved my daughter!

Namor's astonished... the depth of passion so unfamiliar. A long BEAT as Thakkor gets a hold of himself. Then the Octopus Throne releases Namor.

NAMOR
Kraang took a vessel belonging to my people. He kidnapped its crew. I'm not here to spy on you or interfere with you; before yesterday I didn't even know you existed. I'm here to find the vessel, return it and its crew to the surface.

THAKKOR
Kraang did not mention this.

NAMOR
You may want to ask him why.

Thakkor raises his hand, and a small MESSENGER FISH appears.

THAKKOR
Summon Duke Kraang.
(the fish exits)
Tell me, what is your world like?

NAMOR
Beautiful in places. Dangerous in others.

THAKKOR
Maybe it is not so different from the ocean as Kraang would lead me to believe.

Kraang enters, glides to them, nods courteously.

KRAANG
I thought I'd best remain nearby.

THAKKOR
What have you done with the surface creatures' vessel?

KRAANG
Of which vessel do you speak?

NAMOR
You know the one.

KRAANG
I'm afraid I don't. I have collected quite a number of them over the centuries.

NAMOR
The Tucson. The submarine.

KRAANG
Perhaps you could describe this vessel's purpose?

NAMOR
It goes underwater.

KRAANG
Indeed. But what is its *purpose*.

Namor hesitates, suddenly feeling Kraang's trap. But there's no good answer:

NAMOR
It's a warship.

Thakkor reacts. Kraang gives Thakkor a significant look.

KRAANG
Of course. A warship. Curious that your people need a warship which goes underwater...

Now it's Namor in the hot seat. He looks at Thakkor.

NAMOR
It's not what you think.

KRAANG
What *I* think, my Lord, is that the *humans* as they are called, have sent this agent provocateur to breed distrust and sow dissent within our inner circle.
(to Namor)
How large is this submarine you seek?

NAMOR
About as large as your cruiser.

KRAANG
And where exactly am I supposed to have hidden such a monumental craft?

Namor draws a blank. Glances at Thakkor.

NAMOR
Where there's air. If you want to keep the crew alive.

KRAANG
I suppose it could be in one of Ila's slaveholds. No doubt his Majesty will make inquiries, but I can assure you I have no idea where your Tucson is...

Namor darkens; his nictitating eyelids flicker, menacing.

NAMOR
You're lying. And that's too bad. Because you really don't want a war with my kind.

Kraang is unimpressed by Namor's heat. But it's playing differently with Thakkor, and not to Namor's advantage.

KRAANG
If I'm not mistaken, dear Brother, I think we've just been threatened.

Namor pulls back from the brink, realizing how thoroughly out-foxed he's been.

NAMOR
I won't let you do this. I'm going to find them.

EXT. ILA'S PALACE - DAY (ESTABLISHING SHOT)

Ila's CHANDELIER PALACE hangs beneath the city among stalactite OVERSEERS TOWERS and the slaveholds.

EXT. GARDEN, ILA'S PALACE - DAY

The Slave Drivers escort Namor into a garden on one of the palace arms. It's a sybaritic pleasure-pit of exotic furnishings and coral sculpture among a waving maze of sea grass. The Slave Drivers withdraw.

At the center of the garden Ila stands naked before a large mirror, our view of her tastefully obscured. She luxuriates as a school of tiny GROOMING FISH moves over her, nibbling behind her ears, pulling her hair into style.

But Namor is looking down on the industry below. Watches herds of slaves moving at the end of Slave Driver sting-whips. The sight angers him.

NAMOR
Why them? Why aren't your kind slaves?

COUNTESS ILA
(ridiculously obvious)
They breathe air. Why else? Nature has handicapped them. We take care of them. This is how they repay us.
(beat)
But even an escaped slave would know this. Who are you really? I can keep a secret.

NAMOR
You heard Thakkor.

COUNTESS ILA
And I didn't believe him for a second.

NAMOR
Doesn't anyone around here trust anybody?

Ila laughs, enormously amused, incredibly seductive.

COUNTESS ILA
You can trust me.

NAMOR
I do. You just don't remember what if feels like.

It throws her off guard. Almost blushing, she turns away, allows the Fish to dress her in a sleek Atlantian number.

NAMOR
Nice place. Better than Duke Kraang's I bet.

COUNTESS ILA
Of course it is. His Black Tower is an eyesore, if psychologically suitable for his petty games.

NAMOR
What games would those be?

COUNTESS ILA
Intimidation. Kidnapping. Blackmail. Scandal-mongering. Whatever he and that oversized filter-feeder the Squid Master, can devise. The minor nobility are terrified of him and his secret police, but he rarely moves openly against those of us with real power.

NAMOR
Must be hard remembering whose back you've got your dagger in.

COUNTESS ILA
Nonsense. It's all about one thing. Who will be the next Emperor -- or Empress -- of Atlantis.

NAMOR
So Thakkor doesn't have an heir.

COUNTESS ILA
The last 102 were, shall we say, accident-prone? But my dear uncle is a wily old fish, his Shark Legion is incorruptible, and at the end of the day the Octopus Throne protects him from even the most cunning machinations.

NAMOR
Including Kraang's.

COUNTESS ILA
(growing irritated)
Kraang Kraang Kraang. A most unhealthy interest.

NAMOR
You're just jealous I'm not asking about you.

She flicks the Grooming Fish away, whirls on him. Then realizes she's lost her cool. She recovers it, bemused.

COUNTESS ILA
If you have some unpleasantness planned for the good Duke, by all means make me party to it.

ON NAMOR, judging how much to share.

NAMOR
He took something from me. I want it back. It's very large, and he might be keeping it in air.

COUNTESS ILA
There are no air spaces in the upper city, and the undercity is mine.

NAMOR
Get me into the Black Tower.

COUNTESS ILA
And what will you do for me?

NAMOR
What do you want?

COUNTESS ILA
We'll discuss my needs later. As for the Black Tower, you can't see the entrance. You must feel it.
(beat)
The Shark Legion has been scouring the city for something as well. Would it happen to be this mysterious object?

NAMOR
I don't know.

COUNTESS ILA
It would be helpful to know more.

Namor hesitates, remembering Thakkor's orders.

NAMOR
I can't tell you more.

COUNTESS ILA
I see. In that case there is nothing more I can tell you.

She turns away from the disappointed Namor. She considers, then like tossing scraps over her shoulder:

COUNTESS ILA
However, if it is of any use, there are two things Kraang cannot stand. The first is being outsmarted. The second --
(laughing to herself)
-- he is Thakkor's half-brother on his mother's side. But no one knows what his father was...

INT. BRIG, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Jane sits on a bench. The Captain unlocks the door.

CAPTAIN
The Admiral wants to see you.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Jane passes the withering stares of Navy Divers just inside the door to the Dive Ops. The room is active, tense, some kind of major planning underway. The Captain leads Jane to the center plot from which Keller looks up.

ADMIRAL KELLER
This insane story of yours -- if it were real -- what would it sound like on sonar?

JANE
You wouldn't hear anything through the scattering layer.

ADMIRAL KELLER
But if I got a towed-array under the scattering layer?

JANE
Enormous biological activity, strange mechanical sounds. Computer wouldn't know how to classify them.

Keller and the Captain share a look. She sees a fax with notations: UNKNOWN BIOLOGICALS.

ADMIRAL KELLER
The Boyle got her towed array down to 2000 meters, picked up this. 110 miles east of here.

CAPTAIN
You say you met this Nixon character at your refueling stop. Turns out he applied for his own birth certificate at 16. We don't know where he came from.

NAVY DIVER #1
Sonofabitch sleeper agent.

Keller stares the man out of the conversation. As Jane takes all this in:

ADMIRAL KELLER
I'm a long way from believing you, lady, but what I saw the other night I can't explain. And truth be told, I don't care to. All I care about is getting my sub back. If somebody has taken it they're going to pay.

JANE
That's what he said... Make us pay. The genocidal weapon. He meant the sonar. The Tucson's sonar kills fish! Admiral, we might have *started* this whole thing.

He returns to his work, dismissing her.

JANE
What are you going to do?

ADMIRAL KELLER
I'm going to burn the haystack. The needle should be the only thing left.

EXT. BLACK TOWER - DAY

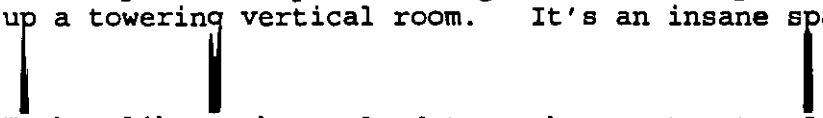
Kraang's Black Tower looms over the Canyon Palatine. Namor floats up its featureless obsidian face. The material it's made out of plays reflective tricks with the poor abyssal light. Namor suddenly pauses.

He touches the tattoo on his neck, his LATERAL LINES, tries to process the strange sensations it's giving him. He closes his eyes, reaches out to what looks like solid wall.

It is the black-on-black illusory doorway. Namor enters.

INT. KRAANG'S MENAGERIE, BLACK TOWER - DAY

Namor opens his eyes, finding himself on a platform midway up a towering vertical room. It's an insane space:



Escher-like archways lead to nowhere; structural supports appear to turn inside out.

Suspended throughout are what appear to be mirrors. But they are, in fact, cubes of water of different salinities, temperatures, qualities, held in shape by some unknown force. Namor drifts out into the chamber.

Namor tries to peer into a prominent cube as he goes by. He touches it, making his reflection shimmer.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM, KRAANG'S TOWER - DAY

Kraang is on the other side of the one-way surface with the Squid Master. They watch Namor move on. Kraang waves his hand over control fibers.

INT. KRAANG'S MENAGERIE - DAY

Namor passes a dark globe of water, DOESN'T SEE the shape of some monstrous THING boil up inside it, only to be thrown back by the walls of its resilient prison.

But another CELL above Namor suddenly loses its coherence, and out of it appears a giant RING OF DISEMBODIED TEETH, the only visible feature of the translucent predator known as a LAMPRANE.

Namor PAUSES. CLOSE ON HIS LATERAL LINES...

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM, KRAANG'S TOWER - DAY

KRAANG
He has the Icthyid lateral-line sense.

INT. KRAANG'S MENAGERIE - DAY

-- CHOMP! Namor DUCKS the Lamprane's decapitating bite, his body moving as if wired directly to his senses. He spins to confront the creature. He can't see it, just its ring of crystalline teeth.

The creature gnashes its mouth, drawing his attention. But it's another invisible extremity which SLASHES Namor.

Namor realizes his eyes are deceiving him. He closes them, FEELING the creature with lateral lines alone. He avoids its next blow, instinctively throws up a warding palm --

-- and unintentionally creating a powerful PRESSURE WAVE.

The shock of water SLAMS into the creature, stunning it. Particles in the water outline the Lamprane's true form for a split second: a gigantic multi-limbed hagfish.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM, KRAANG'S TOWER - DAY

KRAANG
A pressure wave. Fascinating. Let us see how strong he is.

INT. KRAANG'S MENAGERIE - DAY

Namor turns from the Lamprane just as the huge thorned fist of a KINOCEROUS impacts his head. The reddish ogre grabs him. Massive in size, it's vaguely humanoid, five arms betraying its starfish origins.

It shifts Namor from one fist to the other, pummeling him with its free ones as it lumbers --

-- up to a WALL into which it whips Namor with a devastating CRUNCH. It moves to peel him away, but Namor grabs its arm and RIPS it off!

But to his horror the Kinocerous begins to grow another arm, and the torn limb in his hands begins to GROW A BODY.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM, KRAANG'S TOWER - DAY

KRAANG
And how intelligent.

INT. KRAANG'S MENAGERIE - DAY

Namor drops the arm, backs away from the now-writhing mini-Kinocerous, looking up as --

-- DOZENS OF CELLS open, dissolve, release their captives, Kraang's menagerie of MONSTERS pouring out after --

-- Namor. Who's not stupid. Who spins and SUPERCAVITATES the hell out of there!

Gigantic abyssal creatures of all kinds, vertebrates and invertebrates, eyeballs with teeth, tails with oversized claws, swim, scuttle, writhe after him.

They drive him through the hall of mirrors and optical illusions that is the interior of the Tower. He masters it fast, a rat in a maze. He at last comes to an obsidian wall -- dead end -- and turns to face his doom...

Then looks again at the wall. It's not a wall, but a plane of air. He throws himself at it --

INT. AIR POCKET, BLACK TOWER - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

-- and falls on the floor inside the Star Chamber. It takes him a second to realize he's no longer in water.

Namor picks himself up, finds himself kneeling at the center of a spiraling design, Kraang's symbol, the NAUTILOID, reminiscent of the vortex top of *Twilight Zone*.

Namor rises. He DOESN'T SEE Kraang step through the wall behind him. A scary beat. Then slime patters on the floor, giving Kraang away. Namor spins.

KRAANG
The inner eyelid isn't an Icthyid feature, but the lens structure is... Highly developed intercostals for pumping those highly involuted Icthyid lungs... but Icthyids can't breathe air. Fascinating.

Kraang orbits Namor, examining him at a mutually healthy distance.

NAMOR
I'm sure.

KRAANG
As is your unique method of locomotion. Can you feel the muscle contractions? Or do you merely sense a tingling of the skin, the water smooth, frictionless, just... pulling you where you want to go?

Kraang hits it on the money, making Namor uneasy.

KRAANG
To generate that supercavitation bubble, the muscle fibers must be several orders more dense than steel. Which would explain your remarkable hardiness. Amazing.

NAMOR
Nice to have fans.

KRAANG
Indeed. The point is, you're not human, are you?

Namor's been going too long on adrenaline to face this. And now confronted with it, it cracks his confidence.

NAMOR
You're the scientist. What do you think I am?

KRAANG
I haven't the faintest idea.

Kraang perceives Namor's disappointment, realizing:

KRAANG
Neither do you, it appears. Perhaps together we agree upon some kind of taxonomy.
(beat)
Tell me, which do you find more natural, water or air?

NAMOR
I don't know. Which do you?

KRAANG
Neither. Both are tainted with the waste of unclean life forms.

NAMOR
What are you talking about?

KRAANG
A pernicious atom of which this world in its primal state was nearly devoid. You call it oxygen. I call it poison.

NAMOR
Kind of puts you at odds with the rest of the planet, doesn't it?

KRAANG
I readily admit I am in the distinct minority.

Namor hears his forbidding undertone, doesn't know what to make of it.

NAMOR
Is that why you took the Tucson? To get back at oxygen breathers?

KRAANG
Revenge? I would have thought you'd have ascribed higher principles to me.

NAMOR
You expect me to believe you're trying to do some good?

KRAANG
What is good? Do you mean the dictates of personal conscience? Do you mean the Greater Good? Whom do you include in that Greater? Whom do you exclude?
(beat)

KRAANG(cont'd)
You create vessels such as the Tucson to deter, to keep the peace among your own kind. Perhaps you're not aware just how lethal your 'good' is.

Namor REALIZES:

NAMOR
The fish kills. The new sonar system...

KRAANG
It can kill far more than fish. I could not create a weapon more deadly to marine life. Such a weapon is best left in more circumspect hands.

NAMOR
Yours. But you're not just taking a sharp stick away from a kid. You're going to use it.
(beat, realizing:)
On Thakkor.

KRAANG
You really expect me to share my intentions with you?

NAMOR
Why not? I know too much already. You're just going to make me disappear like they did.

Kraang bursts out laughing.

KRAANG
I knew you would come here. You knew I would catch you. And you expect me to take you to the Krypt where you will liberate your submarine.
(off Namor's frustration)
Unfortunately I make it a personal rule to never give anyone exactly what they expect.

Namor steels himself for a fight.

NAMOR
Then let's get it on.

KRAANG
Flattered though I am by your offer, I have no intention of 'getting it on' with you.
(beat)
You may go.

Baffled, Namor looks for some kind of trap.

NAMOR
Let the Tucson and her crew go too, or I promise I'll make your life a living hell.

KRAANG
Hell. Fascinating concept. Fire. Brimstone. That's sulfur, you know.
(beat)
If only you *could*.

Namor doesn't get it, and Kraang doesn't expand. He starts to leave.

NAMOR
You're setting me up for something. But you're going to wish you grabbed me while you had the chance.

Kraang pauses, turns back.

KRAANG
You'll find I have --
(the really, REALLY long beat is a joke)
-- unthinkable patience.

NAMOR
I'm just curious about one thing.

KRAANG
Of course.

NAMOR
The half of you that's not Thakkor's brother: is it out there with the other freaks in your zoo, or are you still looking for it under rocks?

ON KRAANG. His skin darkens with purple-red chromatophores of rage. His mouth opens as his body chemistry changes before our eyes, making him literally seem to boil. Namor takes a step back at the sight of Kraang's demonic visage...

Then like a blown-out thunderstorm Kraang fades back to his sickly yellow. A beat as he recovers from a coughing spasm.

KRAANG
An incisive question. Knowledge is everything. Without it we are simply beasts.

The Squid Master's voice suddenly reverberates:

SQUID MASTER (V.O.)
My Duke, the surface vessels approach.

KRAANG
Excellent. This time let them find us.

Kraang smiles. Namor gets it. He spins, sees the one-way window which looks down on the Canyon Palatine. He dives through the plane of water and --

EXT. BLACK TOWER - DAY

-- smashes through the obsidian wall. He looks up at the Veil, the dense scattering layer above the city. The clouds are roiling. Bioluminescent distress signals flash across the cloud of tiny organisms like heat lightning.

INT. WELL DECK - DAY

A deep BUMP jolts Jane. She barges through a hatch onto the well deck where Navy Divers ready satchel charges of C-4, pass them to Diver #1 who hurls them from the open stern.

JANE
Idiot!

Jane takes off running back the way she came.

EXT. BRIDGE WING, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Admiral Keller stands on the wing outside the bridge. Other vessels are spread out on the sea to the horizon. Jane races up, furious.

JANE
Are you crazy? You're going to depth-charge them?

ADMIRAL KELLER
Seismic explosives. They won't damage the Tucson's hull, just let us take readings through the scattering layer.

Jane just stands there a stupefied moment.

JANE
Your men are packing a little something extra in those satchels.

ADMIRAL KELLER
If they're a bit zealous carrying out their orders... well, you can understand they just lost their friend and leader.

JANE
So you're not just talking about the Tucson, either.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Lady, if some... group took that sub, then they just declared war on the United States. And that makes them my enemy, no matter whose endangered species list they're on.

A deep, resonating BUMP sounds through the keel of the ship. Then another. And another.

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

Atlantians emerge from every section of the upper city, heads upturned as the Veil reverberates with THUNDER and flashes of orange light. It suddenly stops. The crowds murmur.

EXT. TOWER, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Thakkor stares up at the Veil, the silence ominous. Ila appears, alarmed.

COUNTESS ILA
What are they, Uncle?

THAKKOR
Find Kraang.

Baron Yaw signals a Centurion who exits like a shot.

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

And then out of the Veil fall satchel charges. They EXPLODE, punching huge holes in the Veil, sending shock waves down into the canyons of the city.

Atlantis lets out a collective scream, but it's drowned out by the concussions.

Namor races up from the city. Charges go off around him, buffeting him like flak. He vanishes into the Veil.

EXT. BRIDGE WING, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

A sailor calls out to the bridge wing:

SAILOR #1
Sonar says we're starting to get something, sir.

INT. BRIDGE, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Keller enters, Jane on his heels. On a screen, through holes in the scattering layer, appears a fuzzy return: the SKYLINE OF ATLANTIS.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Set the charges for a thousand feet deeper. Lower the ROVS.

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

Charges go off over the city. One puts a HAIRLINE CRACK in a prominent prow-like structure which we'll see later...

EXT. TOWER, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Thakkor braces himself against a concussion. Fragments of a structure higher up in the canyon crumble, begin dropping away. Yaw is deeply concerned.

BARON YAW
Majesty, we must see to your safety.

Kraang suddenly appears. Thakkor wheels on him.

THAKKOR
Kraang!

KRAANG
Even now my Squid Riders are sacrificing themselves to control the situation.

Kraang bows apologetically. Thakkor stares at him, enraged... then turns that gaze to the sea above.

THAKKOR
How did they find us?

Kraang rises from his bow.

KRAANG
I should think that obvious.

EXT. UNDERSEA, MID WATER - DAY

Namor streaks out of the scattering layer, stops, looks up.

A pair of SALVAGE ROVS drop like spiders on their threads from the Bar Harbor. These aren't the delicate machines we saw earlier. Retractable claws, cutting torches, and other weapon/tools unfold on thick mechanical arms.

The ROVS' brilliant lights come on, dazzling Namor for a beat. Then they drop past him toward the tattered remnants of the scattering layer and Atlantis beyond. He shoots after the one nearest to the layer.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Two ROV OPERATORS handle the joystick remote controls for their respective ROVS. Multiple camera views of the ocean.

ROV OPERATOR #1
Coming up on the scattering layer...

EXT. UNDERSEA, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

And Namor SLAMS onto the back of one of the two-ton machines. It goes wild, bucking like a bronc.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Rov Operator #2 reacts, fights the joystick.

ROV OPERATOR #2
Something's got me!

ADMIRAL KELLER
Cut it loose.

EXT. UNDERSEA, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

A CUTTING TORCH blasts on, arcs back at Namor. He grabs it, rolling the machine over as he fights to keep it away from him. But as they spin the ROV's CABLE wraps around the back of his calf. Once. Twice. Again.

Namor finally breaks off the torch, but is now strapped to the machine.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

They watch the spinning monitor views.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Get an eye on him!

EXT. UNDERSEA, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

Namor fights ROV #2. A diamond-tipped buzzsaw whirls to life, slams back and forth over Namor's head. He tries to grab its arm, but it cuts him, and BADLY.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Jane gasps as the lights of ROV #1 reveal NAMOR fighting with its partner.

EXT. UNDERSEA, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

Namor sees it ROV #1 coming at him, opening its deadly array of tools, but strapped to ROV #2, can't do anything except --

-- ROLL a split second before ROV #1 smashes into ROV #2. The collision cuts ROV #2's tether. Namor fights to free himself, protected by the mechanical corpse of ROV #2.

ROV #1 still is trying to get him, and with a timely move, Namor yanks himself back from a descending saw arm, which cuts ROV #2 in half, setting him free.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

ROV Operator #1 jams the joysticks, as if battling Namor on a video game screen.

EXT. UNDERSEA, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

Namor doesn't see the scattering layer parting at his feet.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

But Keller catches a glimpse -- he's not sure of what --

ADMIRAL KELLER
Pan down!

EXT. UNDERSEA, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - DAY

-- but we can see it's Atlantis. Namor hurls a PRESSURE WAVE which smashes every light and camera on the machine, stopping it right in front of him. A beat.

And then he unleashes a SUPERCAVITATING UPPERCUT, launching the robot toward the surface like a Polaris missile.

INT. DIVE OPS, BAR HARBOR - DAY

Both ROV stations are filled with static.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Maintain contact!

OPERATOR
Can't, Admiral, the scattering layer's reforming.
(beat)
We've lost them.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Get CINCPAC. And tell them to bring the whole damn fleet.

EXT. UNDERSEA, SUBSURFACE SCATTERING LAYER - NIGHT

Namor wheels back to Atlantis, is surrounded by Shark Legionnaires with pointed lances.

INT. IMPERIAL PALACE - NIGHT

A pair of massive Great White Sharks cruise in a slow but tight circle about Namor, their Legionnaire riders warily guarding him.

Grim, Thakkor sits in the Octopus Throne. Ila and the rest of the court look stunned by the revelations of the last hours. Kraang, in contrast, appears on top of things, and Thakkor is listening to him.

KRAANG
From the Hidden City we will send out joint embassies to enlist the other civilizations. We must unite the ocean to deal with this threat from above. It is our only hope.

NAMOR
All they want is their submarine back.

KRAANG
They? Don't you mean 'we?'

ON NAMOR, confused himself by his own words.

THAKKOR
I have had the city searched; I have found no such vessel.

NAMOR
Then he's taken it somewhere else. You have to believe me. It has a weapon he intends to use against you.

Kraang throws up his arms in exasperation.

KRAANG
Now there's a weapon. What, pray tell, does this weapon do?

Namor catches himself. Realizes he's playing into Kraang's hands again. Namor looks at Thakkor, decides to hold back.

ON ILA, torn up inside, looking from Namor to Kraang. She believes Namor. And she sees Thakkor doesn't.

KRAANG
Your Majesty, this spy has clearly proven himself too dangerous to leave in the Countess' custody. I must insist she turn him over to the Krypteia.

COUNTESS ILA
Let him go, uncle. Send him with word to his people that we have not taken their vessel.

NAMOR
No. They won't discuss anything if I don't come back with the submarine first. Because despite what you think --
(beat, hard to accept)
-- I'm not really one of them.

It affects Thakkor. He sorts through the impulses of heart and head.

THAKKOR
Did you lead them to us?

NAMOR
If you mean did I betray you? No. If you mean are they here because of my actions, then yes, I'm partly responsible.

ON THAKKOR. His heart is overruled. Beaten:

THAKKOR
We can't afford any more mistakes. Take him, Kraang.
(to Ila)
Summon the Grand Teams.

EXT. PILOT'S TOWER, ATLANTIS - NIGHT

The Pilot's Tower rises from the leading edge of the city like a vast, ornate, multi-tiered prow. Shark Legionnaires school alongside it, lances turned out in phalanx against threats, aggression set to max. They are protecting:

Thakkor, who with Kraang, Ila, Yaw, and other courtiers, rides on the penultimate tier of the Pilot's Tower.

Beneath the tower, stretching out to the horizon are VAST CABLES. Harnessed to them are a 100,000 Slaves. They are draft teams on a scale almost beyond imagining.

Alone atop the Tower stands the ancient and austere PILOT OF ATLANTIS. He stares into the sea, never taking his eyes off the city's path.

EXT. IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Two mounted Shark Legionnaires tow Namor between them out of the Imperial Palace. Waiting for him is the Squid Master, flanked by silent lines of Squid-less Squid Riders, monk-like in their ragged cowls.

Namor glances up. Sees streams of inhabitants gathering to watch the spectacle of the Grand Teams.

The Legionnaires release him to the Squid Master who just hulks there.

NAMOR
Hey, big guy.

Intimidating silence.

NAMOR
What's a matter? Cat got your face?

A monstrous TENTACLE suddenly whips around him and yanks him before --

-- the HUGE EYE of a GIGANTIC SQUID, a prodigy of its kind, far larger than any we've seen. It was hanging overhead. It's the Squid Master's mount of course, and the Squid Master swings onto its mantle.

With a shriek, the Squid Master urges it off toward the Black Tower.

EXT. PILOT'S TOWER, ATLANTIS - DAY

The Pilot finally speaks. Formal. Unshakable. It's a ritual moment.

PILOT OF ATLANTIS
Emperor of Atlantis, what course do you seek?

THAKKOR
The way to the Hidden City.

The Pilot stares into the murky distance. He tests the current as if it were the wind. Anticipation as he decides:

PILOT OF ATLANTIS
The current is strong, but the way is clear! Let it be done!

The CROWD CHEERS, and Ila begins to CHANT. The Grand Teams heave in time. The city gains speed. The Pilot pulls ornate levers. And Atlantis begins to turn.

Buildings and structures groan and flex. The Grand Teams strain as hard as they can, and CATASTROPHE STRIKES.

The HAIRLINE CRACK we saw earlier SPLITS WIDE. The yoke below the Pilot's Tower fractures and one of the cables breaks away, taking a huge section of structure with it.

A neighboring team gets tangled in it and PANICS. The knot begins to loop back toward the Pilot's Tower. The masses SCREAM.

EXT. BLACK TOWER - DAY

The Squid Master is almost to the Black Tower with Namor when Namor sees what's happening. He SPINS into a supercavitating bubble and slips out of the Giant Squid's grasp. The surprised Squid Master turns to face him.

NAMOR
Your boss is down there. Help me save them.

The monstrous Squid sprawls out, impossibly gigantic. Its huge, sharp beak chatters. It's a horrifying sight.

NAMOR
Right...

ON NAMOR'S LATERAL LINES -- there's a ziinging SOUND CUE, and his hand shoots up. He's caught the tip of a tentacle that tried to bushwack him from behind.

NAMOR
Not this time.

He jerks the Squid, and the elasticity of its own arm delivers it RIGHT INTO NAMOR'S DEVASTATING PUNCH. A blast of INK, and everything vanishes from view.

Namor backs out of the cloud, turns, but SENSES the Squid Master emerge from the ink behind him. Namor's inner EYELIDS go down. The Squid Master attacks.

THE CAMERA WHIRLS through global revolutions as they fight, now tracking in a horizontal axis, now sweeping UNDER the subjects, turning everything upside down, only to come back up, revealing everything really IS now upside down. It's a 3-D extravaganza.

EXT. PILOT'S TOWER, ATLANTIS - DAY

Slave Drivers trying to get control are swept away by the writhing mass of thousands. A Centurion rallies the Legionnaires around Thakkor, but before they can act --

-- the end of the cable sweeps out of nowhere and the broken structure still attached to it SMASHES into the tower, a giant wrecking ball which shears off the balcony at Thakkor's feet.

EXT. BLACK TOWER - DAY

Namor finally spins the Squid Master into the wall. He pins him there and unleashes a crushing blow that cracks the face of the Black Tower.

The SCREAMS from below grab his attention. He lets go of the Squid Master, turns to the unfolding disaster.

EXT. PILOT'S TOWER, ATLANTIS - DAY

Namor streaks down into the mayhem. A whale bellows in fear, dragging a host of other animals past. Namor grabs its harness, but it throws him off. The wrecking ball begins to swing around toward the Pilot's Tower again.

There's nothing Namor can do.

Horror and helplessness overwhelm him. He begins to shake. His eyes roll up as if he's been seized by a Grand Mal. And the very fibers of his being, revolting against fate, rip from him the command to:

NAMOR
STOP!

It booms, hypnotic, an iron hand on the mind. Out-of-control slaves go still. Legionnaires freeze. Everyone else is paralyzed. It's as if he's frozen time.

Kraang recovers first. He stares at Namor. Takes in the tableau of disaster frozen before him. Prevented by a single word.

KRAANG
Impossible...

The Tableau slowly returns to life, but not to desperate panic. One by one, the Thakkor, Ila, and the others reanimate. They stare in awe.

THAKKOR
He Spoke us...

Namor, not understanding, backs away, vanishing into the tangled masses of slaves before anyone can catch him.

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

Atlantis glides toward the edge of a vast submarine canyon. Out of the canyon rises a BLACK PALL OF ASH and superheated water which stretches for miles. Nothing can be seen beyond it. It is the HIDDEN CITY of the Ancient Ones.

EXT. KRAANG'S CRUISER - DAY

KRAANG'S CRUISER heads for the Hidden City.

INT. KRAANG'S CRUISER, BRIDGE - DAY

Changing shades of black and purple, Kraang stares out one of the bridge windows. The Squid Master hangs behind him.

KRAANG
She fooled me. She deceived me.
She did NOT outsmart me.

SQUID MASTER
Never, my Duke.

KRAANG
Because I see now. His ability
to breathe both air and water.
His mongrel vitality. Fen hid
the child on the surface...

SQUID MASTER
But my Duke, we saw the body --

KRAANG
She showed us what we expected to see! A deformed monstrosity! It was a placenta, fool! Icthyids don't produce them, but mammals do!

Filled with water as it is, the bridge is designed for zero-g, fantastic and disorienting. Instrument clusters made for eyes on the sides of the head flow with blinding color. Manning them are NAUTILID CREWMEN.

Legless and fragile, they look like brains in shells. But their vicious eyes suggest their true, predatory nature. Kraang floats through the center of the bridge, his colors slowly receding to shades of red as he thinks.

KRAANG
But this Nix does not know who he is. We must find him before he learns to master his powers or he will become as great a threat to our plans as his mother was.

INT. ILA'S PALACE, BALCONY - NIGHT

The Hidden City smolders in the distance as slave work parties secure enormous anchors to the bottom. Lost in troubled thought, Ila watches them from a balcony. She doesn't notice Namor emerge from the shadows behind her.

NAMOR
What would they do if they knew the world above them was a world of air?

COUNTESS ILA
Atlantis would be doomed.

She turns, filled with emotion.

NAMOR
Not doomed. Just different.

COUNTESS ILA
You hate me.

NAMOR
No.

COUNTESS ILA
Why aren't you afraid of me?

NAMOR
You're powerful. Beautiful. What's to be afraid of?

COUNTESS ILA
That I'll betray you in the end.

NAMOR
I'll take my chances.

COUNTESS ILA
No one's ever trusted me before.

NAMOR
Their loss.

Her over-sized eyes are killer. A long beat. She moves oh-so-close. They almost kiss. Then he resists the impulse, and she lets him pull away.

COUNTESS ILA
They are searching the city for you. Kraang. Thakkor. You can't stay here long.

NAMOR
What did I do? How did I stop that accident?

COUNTESS ILA
You Spoke us.

She sees he doesn't understand.

COUNTESS ILA
The Speaking gift is rare. And limited. Most often to a single creature, sometimes to an entire species, rarely to a related group of species. It is feeling what another feels, and that feeling becoming action. Many believe that Speakers bend other creatures to their will. But a Speaker can only influence a creature to do what is in its own nature to do. And it is in the nature of everything to survive.

NAMOR
If you feel what they feel, if Speaking is like some kind of super-empathy, how can you treat them like you do?

He gestures to the slaves. She looks away, and for the first time Namor sees in her face a long-dormant civil war.

COUNTESS ILA
When you Speak a creature, you become more than yourself. It can become... an addiction.

She forces herself to continue.

COUNTESS ILA
No one knows where they come from, but once in generations a Speaker will appear who can Speak all creatures.
(beat)
The Sea Speaker.

Namor thinks back hard, trying to relive what happened.

NAMOR
I could feel what everyone felt all at once. I couldn't do it again, even if I wanted to. And I don't. One set of emotions is enough for me.

COUNTESS ILA
There are many who would gladly suffer the pain to have such power.

NAMOR
Then they don't know what it's like.

COUNTESS ILA
Fen said that once.

NAMOR
Smart woman.

She stares at him, portentous.

COUNTESS ILA
She was a Sea Speaker. There hasn't been another since.

It catches Namor off guard; as he starts to piece it together:

NAMOR
What does that mean?

COUNTESS ILA
It means you have a chance to win Thakkor's heart and stop Kraang from beginning his war.

INT. FORBIDDEN GARDEN - NIGHT

Namor moves to the threshold of a fantastic hanging garden on the edge of the Canyon Palatine.

As he enters, A MASSIVE ANEMONE blooms from a crevice, blocking his way -- beautiful, but there's something WRONG about it. Its polyps spread out, about to gently caress Namor... and then it stops, folds up, letting him pass.

Namor moves on. Archways of coral spread over him like trees. The coral is dead, the holes are empty of fish. It is a haunted house.

Thakkor sits in his Throne at the center of the garden. He doesn't bother looking up, already knows Namor's there.

THAKKOR
Do you know where you are?

NAMOR
No.

THAKKOR
It is the Forbidden Garden. It belonged to my daughter Fen. The anemone slays all who enter. Other than me, of course.

Namor doesn't react. Thakkor finally explodes.

THAKKOR
What in the Great Darkness are you? Say something! WHAT ARE YOU?

NAMOR
I don't know. I don't know who made me. Or *what* made me.

Thakkor's fury subsides, but now he's listening, severe, judging intently, the canny fish-king.

NAMOR
But here I *am*. And kill me or not, you've got to deal with me.

THAKKOR
So it appears.

NAMOR
Kraang is betraying you.

THAKKOR
There is nothing in my house I don't see. No one I don't notice.

ON NAMOR: it's all he ever asked of Gunny Nixon.

NAMOR
Your family is luckier than they realize.
(beat)
But if you truly knew what Kraang was up to, you'd see things in a different light.

THAKKOR
How would I see things?

NAMOR
You'd help me find the Tucson. And you'd wait before going to war.

THAKKOR
I've searched the city for your ship.

Namor looks out at the Hidden City.

NAMOR
Maybe it's not in this city.

But Thakkor isn't listening. He's fallen into a reverie. The Octopus Throne paces for him.

THAKKOR
You should have seen this garden. It was a living wonder. Every creature Father Ocean dreamed of came to her. She loved them all. She would have changed everything.

NAMOR
What happened to her?

THAKKOR
She vanished. Maybe it was a rival. Or maybe it was the Black Tooth, as the superstitious say. Does it matter?

NAMOR
What was the Black Tooth?

THAKKOR
An heirloom with a bloody history.

THAKKOR(cont'd)
I gave it to her for her birthday, to encourage her in the ways of an Empress. Not long after, she asked me if I loved her enough to make her a promise without knowing what it was. I said yes. Then she told me she gave the Tooth to the man she loved, who would rule Atlantis with her. And that when I saw it again, I must promise to love the man who bore it, no matter what I thought of him. I never gave her another birthday gift.

Thakkor trails off, the loss overwhelming. He looks at the desolate garden. He starts musingly, but it turns into a genuine, half-pathetic request:

THAKKOR
Could you... make it like it used to be?

NAMOR
It's not my garden.

A beat. Then Thakkor nods.

THAKKOR
You're very wise. You'd be wiser still to forget what it is you're thinking. For both our sakes.

ON NAMOR, almost too afraid to ask:

NAMOR
What am I thinking?

Thakkor turns on him, resolute.

THAKKOR
You think you are some child of Fen's. Some spirit of hers. I tell you, you are not. She had no child. And her spirit abandoned this place long ago.

He turns away, leaving Namor in the desolate garden with his rejection.

INT. THRONE ROOM, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Thakkor sits on the throne at the center of the court. Kraang sweeps in, and all heads turn.

KRAANG
Your Majesty, after all our troubles, it pleases me to bring more than welcome news from the Hidden City. Not only do the Ancient Ones agree to our proposal of alliance, but they have long foreseen this day. To that end, they have mustered their war-hordes, and now possess an enormous army with which to confront our enemies above.

The entire court gasps at the news.

BARON YAW
But they cannot survive outside their city!

KRAANG
The Ancient Ones have fashioned atmosphere armor which allows them to withstand the ordinary ocean or the near-vacuum of the surface world for a limited time. However, as they cannot swim, and lack vessels with suitable range and combat-worthiness, we must carry them into battle. We must convert the slaveholds to their chemical environment. Their engineers stand ready to enter the city and carry out the modifications.

Everyone turns to Thakkor. He sits there quiet, pensive.

COUNTESS ILA
My slaveholds are overcrowded as it is! Where will they go --

Thakkor stops her with a hand.

THAKKOR
Before we embark upon this plan, I wish to explore the possibility of negotiation with the surface.

The emotionally-whipsawed court catches its breath again. Kraang is surprised.

THAKKOR
We will search for their missing vessel. In the event we are being blamed for an accident.

Kraang starts to argue but sees the court's relief and Thakkor's determination. A dark shade of red from covers his cheeks.

EXT. EDGE OF HIDDEN CITY - DAY

Namor speeds toward the Hidden City. The curtain of ash is distorted by a mirage of super-heated water. He steels himself, and VANISHES into the rumbling cloud of ash.

HIS POV: glimpsing some kind of geological formations below, and then BLACKNESS.

EXT. HIDDEN CITY - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

GAPS appear in the cloud, and out of it, like a palisade around the city, appear BLACK SMOKERS -- towering volcanic stalagmites -- which belch mineral-rich ash, keeping the chemistry of the ordinary sea at bay.

The forest of chimneys gradually becomes less dense, giving way to fewer, giant specimens. Rivers of lava cast a ruddy glow which reflects off the clouds above. Vortices of water rise from deep fissures in the sea floor, spiral off across the city like tornadoes.

It's a glimpse of primordial earth. Then MOVEMENT on the seafloor: there's something alive down there.

ON NAMOR, hammered by waves of superheated water. He lifts his face. His human skin is gone. There is only the super-dense, silver layer of muscle beneath.

EXT. BEEHIVE FACTORY, HIDDEN CITY - NIGHT

Namor is swept over a slag-metal glacier which drops over a precipice into a pit of molten lava flowing beneath a BEEHIVE-LIKE FORMATION. It's a factory.

Twisting ramps of ropy stone lead from all points on the seafloor to the factory's entrances. Climbing them are living hallucinations: ANCIENT ONES. Namor stares in awe.

Some are radially symmetrical, arthropod-jointed like Siamese Daddy-long-legs. Some in heavy carapaces totter along like hunched old men or clams walking upright. Other rope-like creatures flip end-over-end like Slinkys.

Many have spiral body plans. Others have no symmetry at all, so alien that there's no frame of reference for them. They're creatures that haven't been seen in a half billion years. It's as if the Burgess Shale has come to life.

Water conditions are so violent, nothing can swim. It crawls, scuttles, clings. A current sucks Namor toward the factory, over huddled masses unaccustomed to looking up.

INT. BEEHIVE FACTORY, HIDDEN CITY - NIGHT

The factory is a former volcanic cone. Ancient Ones toil at magma-powered blast furnaces. The exhaust upwelling wafts Namor through the production process:

Multi-armed creatures manipulate raw metal from furnaces. Burnt arms drop off, regenerate before our eyes. Acid-secreting workers bore holes and etch designs. Fitters take parts into their bodies, release assemblages.

Crinoids touch their rope-like heads, their joint mind contemplating Namor's NEWT SUIT. Clam-Men perform quality control, measuring PRESSURE SPHERES against a standard: a 1930s HUMAN BATHYSCAPE.

The water carries Namor the top of the factory. There, the final product stands on an open ledge in rows upon rows:

ATMOSPHERE ARMOR. The armor is the alien mirror image of the Newt Suit, an engineering response to *containing* water at high pressures.

It's an arsenal designed for every conceivable body type. Kraang's symbol, the NAUTILOID, is on everything.

Suddenly KRAANG'S CRUISER emerges from a cloud, passes overhead. Flares of gas briefly illuminate distant regions of the city, enormous structures, forbidding precincts. Namor watches it vanish into the clouds and darkness.

EXT. KRAANG'S CRUISER, CITADEL, HIDDEN CITY - NIGHT

The Cruiser mates with a lava pier sheltered from the currents. Kraang glides out, inhales the sulfuric water, and turns to the infernal landscape. The Master waits on him, now in a sleek black suit of atmosphere armor.

KRAANG
The humans have a saying despicable for its sentimentality but true: there's no place like home.

EXT. HIDDEN CITY - NIGHT

Dead lava channels snake across the seafloor among the chimneys and structures of the city. Shielded from the currents above, thousands of Ancient Ones migrate down the channels toward a distant mountain, THE CITADEL.

MOVE IN ON a solitary creature in humanoid atmosphere armor. He slogs along with the masses. It's Namor.

INT. HALL OF THE ARCHONS, CITADEL - NIGHT

The pyramidal room is filled with a yellowish haze of methane and sulfur -- no water. Kraang enters. Waiting for him are the seven ARCHONS of the Hidden City. They're Ancient Ones of various kinds.

KRAANG
Your excellencies. Thakkor hesitates to go to war and refuses to invite our troops into the city. He will soon identify this as the trap which it is. While we are denied the tactical advantage of betrayal from within, we must proceed with my plan to take Atlantis by force. We will use the Earthmen's weapon. A few more days and it will be operational.

ARCHON #1
The hives grow restless, Kraang. There can be no further delay.

KRAANG
We have been patient for 300 million years.

ARCHON #2
You do not suffer like we do!

ARCHON #1
(to Kraang, explaining)
Some think your sympathies lie with your other half.

Kraang darkens. His gaze singles out a snivelling, clear-shelled arthropod.

KRAANG
I will extinguish such rumors. And anyone who starts them.

ARCHON #2
The Design is far too important to entrust to one at war with himself.

KRAANG
It would be madness to give command to anyone but me.
(beat)

KRAANG(cont'd)
Once we have captured Atlantis we will have the means to change the face of the entire planet.

There is some quasi-verbal consultation among the Archons.

ARCHON #1
If it will ensure our possession of Atlantis, we grant you a last chance to make the Earthmens' weapon operational.

Kraang whirls away. Then, intrepid, he turns back.

KRAANG
There is one more thing. In the moment of action, I cannot be second-guessed. I must have absolute power. I must be Warlord.

ARCHON #2
A bold demand from one whom many call a traitor.

ARCHON #1
The hives have come to hear your defense. Persuade them, and perhaps we too shall be persuaded.

Kraang bows. He moves to a triangular door. It opens like a nasty brain-teaser puzzle, and he steps --

INT. CENTRAL CAVERN, CITADEL - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

-- onto a flying balcony which extends far out into the vast central cavern of the Citadel. The Citadel is an extinct volcano, its walls and far-off features hazy with the alien atmosphere. Burning methane blasting from stalactite chimneys illuminates a scene straight out of the dawn of life:

Crawling out of the water, filling the natural pillow-lava amphitheater, are the Ancient Ones.

INT. FLOOR OF CENTRAL CAVERN, CITADEL - NIGHT

Among them is NAMOR. He suddenly catches sight of Kraang. Kraang walks to the end of the flying balcony. He stares down from his pulpit, and the strange, babbling voices of the masses die away. A long BEAT.

KRAANG
I dream of a pale sun. Of yellow skies. Of desolate shores on endless, boiling seas.

KRAANG(cont'd)
I dream of the Earth a billion years ago before it was polluted, laid waste by the vermin which rule it now. Of which vermin do I speak, you ask? The Atlantians? The Earthmen? The plants and animals?
(beat)
All of them. Those that make oxygen. Those that use it and perpetuate the cycle. The oxygen that is everywhere. In air, in water, in the very rock itself! The oxygen that poisons and rusts the face of our Mother-Father Earth! WE WILL BREAK THAT CYCLE!

He pounds the pulpit Hitler-style, and the Ancient Ones SHRIEK in approval.

KRAANG
There are some who wonder, do we have the right to act? I ask you, what gave the poisoners the right? They changed our planet. They did not ask if they had the right. We did not provoke them. Yet they commit a never-ending crime against us. What is that crime? They breathe.
(beat)
And now, except for this last oasis, they have taken away our world. How will we get it back?

He looks about, hopeless. Then turns utterly confident.

KRAANG
I have a plan. A Design. I have spent lifetimes in its making, and only now in the fullness of circumstance is it time to act. Many of you know details of The Design, none of you know all of it. That is by intention, for the spies of the enemy are cunning.

Kraang looks down RIGHT AT NAMOR. Indignant howls, and creatures turn on each other in paranoid fashion. Namor takes an involuntary step back, but realizes after a second it was an intentional effect meant to scare everyone.

KRAANG
And so I come to you tonight. Not to share with you the innermost secrets of the Design, but to tell you your eons of waiting are over.

KRAANG(cont'd)
We begin a long journey. Our first step is at hand. We will take Atlantis.

A violent, GIBBERING SCREAM goes up.

KRAANG
With it we will reclaim our planet. And once again we will stand on the shores of a brave *old* world.
(beat)
This I pledge this with all my hearts --

Kraang's robe unfolds revealing his TRUE FORM. He is a fused, snake-like mass of chemosynthetic TUBE WORMS. Beatific, his arms OPEN WIDE. His hands are MOUTHS.

KRAANG
-- for I am one of you.

Shrieking BEDLAM shakes the Citadel. Horrified, Namor backs away.

INT. HALL OF THE ARCHONS, CITADEL - NIGHT

Body reverting to normal, Kraang steps in from the balcony.

ARCHON #1
Well done... Warlord Kraang.

KRAANG
Prepare the hordes. We attack upon my return.

EXT. KRAANG'S CRUISER, UNDERSIDE - DAY

The Cruiser emerges from the Hidden City, Namor in armor clinging to its side like a tiny alien parasite.

EXT. ANTARCTICA - DAY

Massive waves pound at the rugged green-blue cliffs of the Antarctic ice sheet. It is austere, beautiful, forbidding. CAMERA races toward it, and at the last second twists DOWN, diving into the waves, forging deep discovering --

EXT. UNDER ICE SHELF - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

-- Kraang's Cruiser approaching an underwater CHASM in the wall of ice. It doesn't look like the Cruiser will fit, and it's not stopping. Namor bails off just before it jams itself into the chasm.

The Cruiser's STEEL TENTACLES unfurl and it begins BURROWING with surprising speed. Namor can't keep up as Kraang's Cruiser worms its way into the ice sheet, vanishing from sight.

INT. ICE CHANNEL, KRYPT - DAY

Namor walks up the nearly vertical channel, the armor's foot spikes gripping the wall with each step. It's a crystalline wonderland. Enormous fractures in the ice sheet branch out before him. The Cruiser could have gone any which way.

INT. GALLERY OF WRECKS, THE KRYPT - DAY

Namor rises from the water into AIR. He strides out onto ice and stops. Releasing a fountain of high-pressure water, the Atmosphere Armor unfolds from him like a metal origami. Namor steps out, looks up in AWE.

A vast gallery rises to a ceiling hundreds of feet above, and looming out of the ice before him, a hole-riddled JAPANESE BATTLESHIP takes aim at a toppled Exxon DRILLING PLATFORM.

Namor moves beneath the skewed, rusted barrels of the battleship's main guns. In its shadows rests a plane which looks uncannily like Amelia Earhardt's.

Speechless, Namor begins climbing a smooth, snaking pathway of ice up the rising floor of the gallery.

Enormous shapes are imbedded in the ice, here and there a bow visible. Namor slows, feeling out of breath. Notes it, but presses on up the ice floe which --

-- winds over the superstructure of a modern car-carrier, its torn-open hold filled with thousands of shrink-wrapped BMWs. Namor stops at the top as we PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

The gallery stretching MILES into the distance, lined with ships, planes, wrecks, all of human origin, spanning all of human history...

INT. ICE BRIDGE, KRYPT - DAY

Like a fat metal spider in its spherical, multi-legged atmosphere armor, a Nautilid SUPERVISOR scuttles along, making excuses to Kraang and the Squid Master.

SUPERVISOR
We have the device, my Duke. But there are complexities.

KRAANG
Complexities are the spice of life. I have waited centuries for the Earthmen to produce a weapon which would allow me to defeat Thakkor and his Shark Legion without destroying the city itself.

SUPERVISOR
The interface cryptography is impenetrable, and the procedural lexicon's requirements appear to be very specific.

KRAANG
You mean you can't read the control panel and the manuals make no sense.

SUPERVISOR
The requirements are very specific.

KRAANG
Mine were as well.

Kraang's arm whips around, spraying a JET OF ACID. It burns instantly through the Supervisor's armor. While the hapless henchman cooks alive in his own pot, a second Nautilid SCIENTIST comes up.

SCIENTIST
My Duke, there is an intruder in one of the minor annex areas.

KRAANG
Indeed.

Kraang and the Squid Master exit as the Supervisor smokes, screeches, and falls over with a clang.

INT. GALLERY OF WRECKS, THE KRYPT - DAY

Namor is miles into the gallery now. He is breathing hard, holding onto the keel as a handrail, climbing down the long, steep back of an capsized cruise ship.

He suddenly slips and bounces hard down its length. He misses the giant blades of the screws at the bottom, goes airborne, bounces some more on the ice, and finally comes to a stop against the shattered wooden hull of a nineteenth-century WHALER.

He gets to his hands an knees, but it HURTS. His palms, scuffed on the ice, are NOT HEALING. He COUGHS, which triggers a WRACKING CONVULSION.

Namor writhes as his organs involute, the first step in his reverse TRANSFORMATION. It finally subsides, leaving him somewhere in between. He realizes:

NAMOR
Pressure's lower in here.

He picks himself up; he steps through the shattered hull of the whaler into --

INT. GRAVEYARD, THE KRYPT - DAY

-- a graveyard. Entombed in the floor of ice, and in the walls around the open space are BODIES. Some in canvass bags with cannonballs at their feet, some in Eskimo parkas, others in contemporary naval uniform.

They are from every tribe of humanity that has set out upon the sea. Over each is a marker, in English. Most read: UNKNOWN SAILOR. A few have names, some have dates.

Namor puzzles over the makeshift -- and very human -- craftsmanship of the markers.

And then something catches his eye: a small, yellow submarine, its dingy oil-stained profile somehow familiar. He limps toward it. Recognition.

NAMOR
The Otter...

Its ports are broken out, its hull bearing the marks of battle with a giant squid. He peers inside. It's been scavenged. Tools, frosted with disuse, lie on the seat as if a human mechanic forgot them there. Namor turns.

Not far away stands the BRIDGE of a small freighter; the rest of the ship is a shadow beneath the ice. Namor approaches.

INT. MCKENZIE'S ABANDONED QUARTERS - DAY

And enters. It's a circa 1990s bridge, but it's furnished like some old sea captain's shack. Antiques, oil lamps, charts and long-lost works of art give the high-tech space a timeless nautical look.

Namor moves to a kitchen table. On it is a frozen bowl of soup. No one has been here for a long time. Next to it is a BIBLE. Namor opens the cover. Inside is a name:

NAMOR
Leonard McKenzie.

He turns the pages, sees passages underlined, signposts on the journey of a spiritual man. He closes the book, moves on. Looks at the paintings: all are portraits. A chair is set up to face them. An imaginary family circle.

He picks up a pea jacket from the arm of the easy chair. Namor touches where hands have worn away the armrest fabric. He examines the jacket. About his size. He starts to put it on, and SOMETHING FALLS OUT OF ITS POCKET:

At first it looks like an alien pocket knife. Then he sees it for what it really is: a BLACK SHARK'S TOOTH made of lustrous black coral. Its wildly-engraved surface ends in a small, strange-looking grip.

Staring at it, finally UNDERSTANDING, he picks up the Tooth. And a WAVE of contractions hits him.

His lateral lines shrink to mere pores in his skin. Goosebumps raise fine BODY HAIR over his arms. His breath becomes visible in the cold.

His inner eyelids vanish; pupils contract. Looks at his hands, sees them shake. Feels the oncoming hypothermia. He forces McKenzie's jacket on, then fumbles for the door.

EXT. GRAVEYARD, KRYPT - DAY

Namor staggers out of the frozen freighter. And there, in front of him, prominent among the bodies in the ice is:

MCKENZIE. Standing, arms folded, eyes closed. Like a king of old.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Namor goes to him. And reaching out to touch his bearded, soulful face, touches:

HIS OWN REFLECTION in the ice. Superimposed over McKenzie's. There can be no doubt who he is:

NAMOR
You were my father...

KRAANG (OC)
Of course he was.

Namor spins. And there is Kraang. The Squid Master in armor behind him, NAUTILID COMMANDOS scuttling over the ice, surrounding them all. They're spider-legged, a pressure sphere at the core, rigged for combat.

KRAANG
And who your mother was should be equally obvious. I would have recognized you from the start... had I known you existed.

NAMOR
Fen...

Namor's whole world is turning upside down.

KRAANG
Yes, Fen. The fantasies you must have entertained all these years. Of tearful reconciliations. Of happy reunions. Could you have even begun to imagine this?
(beat)
Why are we so obsessed with those who make us? To them the act of our creation was no more trouble than cooking soup.

NAMOR
But how do you *know*? Thakkor said -

KRAANG
She sang to you, fool. While you were in her belly. At the time I thought them merely insipid little ditties. But now it appears she was Speaking you, implanting your fetal brain with her powers.

Despite Kraang's disparaging remarks, the image of maternal love is blowing Namor away, rewriting everything he ever supposed about himself. And then it turns to hate.

NAMOR
You killed them.

KRAANG
I didn't kill McKenzie. The fact you're alive right now in your reduced state is his legacy one could say. He verified the efficacy of my preservative gas. And he verified its limits.

Kraang approaches, looks at McKenzie with some fondness.

KRAANG
He was my cultural tutor. My poker buddy. I miss him.

KRAANG(cont'd)
He wished to be placed with the rest of his collection. And though I cannot understand his dedication to cataloguing the dead, I was happy to honor that wish.

He turns away. Darkens.

KRAANG
Your mother is another story, however. Had she not stolen McKenzie from my Black Tower and hid him in the slaveholds, none of this --
(dig at Namor)
-- bad blood would have occurred. Rudimentary genetics says you are an impossibility. Fen played upon my assumptions. But she has paid for it.

He pinches Namor's arm, lets it fall, unimpressed.

KRAANG
It appears you require a combination of seawater and pressure to adopt your more-vigorous form. I wonder if all such human-icthyid matings would produce a being such as yourself. Or whether you are an aberration. Of course I'd be insane to conduct such an experiment. The last thing the world needs is a race of oxygen-breathing, super-human amphibians. When time permits I'll have to content myself with dissecting you.
(to Squid Master)
Bring him.

INT. KRYPT, U.S.S. TUSCON - DAY

Under guard, Namor follows Kraang and the Squid Master into a towering ice cavern. And there, at the center of what looks like a cross between a laboratory and a giant chop shop, is the U.S.S. TUCSON.

Its human CREW strips components from the sub under the watchful eye of Nautilid Commandos.

Commandos push Namor along after Kraang. He stumbles and falls near a group of American sailors.

From the midst of the sailors steps the haggard but tough-minded CAPTAIN JONES. He looks at Namor, not recognizing him, but concerned.

KRAANG
Captain Jones. I must tell you how disappointed I am that my Scientists have not made your VIOLA system operational. It appears there is some missing element. Though they have literally dismantled your ship in their search for it, it seems they cannot find it. Perhaps it is a procedure rather than an element. I would be most grateful if you would point us in the right direction.

Kraang tries to smile, but it just comes off as scary.

JONES
The problem I've got, Mr. Kraang, is that I think if I help you, you won't release us, you'll kill us.

Kraang turns red, has a coughing spasm. It passes.

KRAANG
A quandary indeed. I have a solution, but I don't think you'll like it.

His hand suddenly WHIPS around the base of Jones' skull. A burly CHIEF OF THE BOAT jumps at Kraang, throws a fist --

-- which Kraang catches with his other hand. The Chief of the Boat goes rigid as a board and topples over, PARALYZED. Nautilid Commandos aim multiple weapons everywhere an instant later.

KRAANG
With my nematocysts and some basic chemistry I can take what I want directly from your brain. Unfortunately your brain is liquefied in the process.

Namor starts for Kraang, but Kraang stops him with a warning finger.

JONES
I'm not telling you anything.

With that, Kraang's needle-like NEMATOCYSTS penetrate Jones' brain. Sailors grab the raging Namor back before he can do anything suicidal.

KRAANG
Captain Jones, what is the missing component to your sonar system?

Jones is trying to fight it inside. Kraang's eyes narrow to slits; it's a contest of will.

JONES
A key...

KRAANG
A key. And where is this key?

Jones resists. And then his eyes goes blank. It comes out in disturbing, melted syllables:

SMITH
Arr...ound...my...neckkk...

Kraang's fingers slide into Jones' shirt, lift a chain with a KEY CARD from it. He releases Jones who falls dead. Namor points at the Chief of the Boat, insistent:

NAMOR
Help him.

KRAANG
A simple paralytic. He will recover.

Kraang turns to the crew of the Tucson.

KRAANG
You will obey my orders without hesitation. You will do so willingly... or unwillingly. You're in *my* navy now. Prepare to depart.

Namor steps toward him. Two Nautilid Commando guards interpose themselves. Profound:

NAMOR
I hate you.

KRAANG
Get used to it.
(to Commandos)
Do not use your high-pressure weapons on him.

Namor is dragged away as Commandos herd the human crew aboard the Tucson, and Kraang ascends its conning tower.

Commandos fire HYDRO BEAMS into the ice around the submarine. The laser-like streams of water cut gaping holes. The submarine settles with a groan, and as Kraang stands there like Captain Ramius, the Tucson vanishes into a channel under the ice.

INT. BRIDGE, U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

Kraang stands at the conn. Commandos in the wings watch over the human crew operating the sub.

KRAANG
Take her down to 22,000 feet.

A startled HELMSMAN looks back at him.

CHIEF OF THE BOAT
That's way below crush depth.

KRAANG
My engineers have seen to some improvements. Do not hesitate again, Mr. Norris.

HELMSMAN
22,000 feet, aye.

INT. TUNNEL, KRYPT - DAY

The Commandos march Namor down an ice tunnel. He eyes them, their suits of armor. Though each is as big as a dumpster, the Nautilids inside are half his own size. He puts his hands in the pockets of McKenzie's jacket; feels the Tooth.

NAMOR
(making conversation)
Pressure's a bit lower in here, huh? Those suits are pretty cool. Must keep it at a nice, comfy psi for you guys.

STOMP STOMP STOMP. No response. He stops. It makes one of the Commandos stop too. It spins an intimidating eye port on him.

NAMOR
At least that's what I'm hoping.

Namor STABS the glass port as hard as he can, but the Black Tooth just recoils in his hand with a painful CRACK. It's left only the tiniest divot in the port. Uh oh. A beat.

And then POOM! The glass blows out, and the Commando EXPLODES in a huge gout of water which blasts both it and Namor against opposite sides of the tunnel.

The popped Commando caroms off the roof, and lands on the floor spinning like a crazy water toy. Its partner whirls, kicks it out of the way to get to --

-- the PARTIALLY-TRANSFORMED NAMOR! Nictitating eyelids go down and --

-- WHAM! He slugs the Commando, and it EXPLODES at the seams like a water balloon. Namor takes off running.

INT. TUBE THROUGH ICE SHEET - DAY

Namor bounds off walls at superhuman speed. Commandos give chase. There's a twisting worm-hole ahead, too narrow for the Commandos, and he LEAPS INTO IT.

It drops away into the heart of the ice sheet like a waterslide. Kicking up a spray of melt-water, he SURFS IT, half-piping down the crazy winding tube.

The ice goes from a dark glimmer to a sea-ice blue as he skids barefoot through an impossible series of turns with moves that'd make Tony Hawks green.

The ice gets lighter and lighter, finally goes white and --

EXT. ICE SHELF, ANTARCTICA - DAY

-- Namor bursts out into AIR. He hangs in space 500 feet over the Antarctic Ocean. He FLAILS, twisting --

-- out of his father's jacket. He puts the BLACK TOOTH in his teeth like a dagger, straightens, and his fall becomes:

The world's highest 10-point cliff dive into the sea.

INT. THRONE ROOM, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

The Octopus Throne paces with Thakkor.

THAKKOR
Where is Kraang?

There's a commotion at the entry, and Thakkor turns, but it's not Kraang, it's --

-- Namor. He advances into the room, undeterred by the host of lances pointed at him. Silence falls over the court. The Octopus Throne responds to Thakkor's instinct to take a step forward.

NAMOR
I'm the Son of Fen. And a human named Leonard McKenzie.

An awed and scandalized GASP goes up. Except from Ila who has to hide her private joy. Namor approaches.

NAMOR
But I don't know my own name.

He opens his hand, revealing the Black Tooth. Thakkor stares at it, then him, makes no move to take it. A long beat, as the consequences and emotions play out between them.

NAMOR
Your promise. It was to prepare you for what she had to show you. That Earth is not the enemy.

BARON YAW
Your Majesty, say the word and --

THAKKOR
-- I will honor my promise.

Namor takes it in, everything Thakkor means, and it's almost too much for him.

NAMOR
Kraang killed her. He took my family away from me before I even knew them.

THAKKOR
He didn't take all of your family.
(beat)
Your name, then, is Namor. It means Avenging Son.

Namor straightens, accepting it, banishing the grief. A Centurion suddenly enters, interrupting the moment.

CENTURION
Majesty. Something is coming out of the Hidden City. Toward us.

Thakkor gestures, and as the wall opens to reveal a Gothic window, Namor steps forward.

NAMOR
Kraang has betrayed you to the Hidden City. He means to take over Atlantis with a weapon on board the Tucson.

THROUGH THE WINDOW:

Out of the ashes of the Hidden City appears THE TUCSON. The seafloor below seems to be MOVING toward Atlantis. It is crawling with Ancient Ones in atmosphere armor.

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

Squid Riders emerge from the abyss escorting --

-- Kraang's Cruiser. It's coiled armor shell UNROLLS, revealing a deck crammed with rows of waiting Nautilid Commandos and giant, spindly ARMORED DRONES. The ship changes configuration, no longer a defensive dreadnought, but a deadly, weapon-spangled predator.

Behind it appears the Tucson and a host of smaller NAUTILID ATTACK CRAFT.

INT. BRIDGE, U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

Kraang picks up a microphone, a bit fey.

KRAANG
I suppose the moment calls for an ultimatum or some such statement of purpose.

INT. THRONE ROOM, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Kraang's amplified voice carries through the water:

KRAANG (V.O.)
This is Kraang, Warlord of the Ancient Ones. Atlantis is mine. Resist and be destroyed. Yield... and be destroyed later.

THAKKOR
Let the Shark Legion feed. Bring me the traitor's head.

HORNS SOUND. Namor pulls Ila aside.

NAMOR
Go to the slaveholds. Be ready.

INT. U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

The Squid Master appears to Kraang on a monitor.

SQUID MASTER (V.O.)
The diversionary force is in position to attack the undercity, Warlord.

KRAANG
As soon as we have disposed of the Shark Legion, land the Nautilid Commandos in the Palatine.

EXT. CANYON PALATINE - DAY

The entire Shark Legion pours out of the palace. Some are free-swimming, many are mounted on sharks. They form up in BATTLE SCHOOLS, vertical wedges that move in unison, cued by the lead Centurions.

EXT. NEAR ATLANTIS - DAY

The huge formations of Legionnaires advance. Battle schools turn end-on, vanishing as they do, and reappear elsewhere. It's impressive, but there's something too-formal, even Napoleonic about it.

INT. BRIDGE, U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

Kraang's hand opens, and it disgorges the KEY to the VIOLA SYSTEM. He places it into a slot in the instrument panel.

KRAANG
I must hand it to you humans. You certainly know how to kill things.

EXT. U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

A TOWED-ARRAY SONAR deploys from the sub on its long cable. Seeing it, the escorting Squid Riders veer away fast.

EXT. OCEAN, NEAR ATLANTIS - DAY

Namor speeds toward the Tucson. Ahead of him the Shark Legion reaches the Squid Rider screen and the lines CRASH TOGETHER.

Legionnaires lance Squid Riders. Sharks take crippling bites from their Squids. Tentacles throttle Legionnaires. Clouds of ink blossom across the 3-dimensional battlefront. Squid Riders darken from their translucent CAMOUFLAGE, and ambush Legionnaires of nowhere.

As they fight, it's clear that the Shark Legion is more than a match for the Squid Riders, even though it takes a dozen of them to fight a single Rider/Squid.

A Battle School gets through the fray, closes on the Tucson. Namor sees it, follows it in like a running back behind the scariest bunch of blockers anyone's ever seen --

INT. KRAANG'S CRUISER, BRIDGE - DAY

And the Squid Master fires a volley of WAVE TORPEDOES.

EXT. OCEAN, NEAR ATLANTIS - DAY

They erupt from Kraang's Cruiser, distort the water, huge spheres of pressure. They rumble toward the Legionnaires and IMPACT.

The Battle School just disintegrates. A torpedo SLAMS into Namor, carries him away from the Tucson until it finally dissipates and leaves him spinning helplessly while --

INT. BRIDGE, TUCSON - DAY

-- Kraang twists the key card in its slot.

EXT. OCEAN, NEAR ATLANTIS - DAY

PING. PING. PING. Waves of DEAFENING SOUND roll through the water around the Tucson. Legionnaires stiffen. Sharks keel over, dumping their riders. Fish go belly-up.

Surrounded by an invisible sphere of death, the Tucson moves on, cutting a swath through the defenders of Atlantis.

INT. DIVE OPS, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

PING. PING. PING. A sonar operator's screen LIGHTS UP, computer analyzing, identifying the source as U.S.S. TUCSON.

OPERATOR
Admiral, you're not going to believe this...

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

A final PING sends a last cohort of Legionnaires into a death spiral, and the Tucson goes silent.

EXT. CONNING TOWER, U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

Kraang stands on the conning tower with his lieutenants, basks in the devastation the submarine has wrought. The Squid Master swims up on his gigantic squid.

SQUID MASTER
The Shark Legion is destroyed.

KRAANG
Excellent. I will transfer to my Cruiser for the final assault.
(to nearby Commando)
Make a pass over the city with the Tucson for good measure.

EXT. OCEAN, NEAR ATLANTIS - DAY

Namor sees the remains of the Shark Legion, the Tucson now making directly for Atlantis. A beat.

And then FURIOUS, he hurls himself into supercavitation, faster and faster, the bubble shrieking out behind him. 70 knots, 80, 90, 100...

EXT. U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

Kraang mounts the Squid Master's squid, which starts toward his Cruiser when --

-- The Tucson itself suddenly and impossibly ACCELERATES VERTICALLY out from underneath him. It's Namor.

Muscles strain. Streaks of bubbles race over Namor's body. He turns the unwieldy vessel toward the surface, gaining speed, and barely able to control it.

Kraang recovers from his shock, orders the Squid Riders:

KRAANG
Stop him!

INT. U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

Everyone on the bridge is hurled to the side. The Chief of the Boat lands against the WEAPONS LOCKER. A mean look, and he throws it WIDE.

INT. THRONE ROOM, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

The court scatters from Thakkor who remains at the Gothic window. The shadow of Kraang's Cruiser eclipses the Canyon Palatine. Spines extend to various buildings, and the hordes of Nautilid Commandos begin landing.

EXT. U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

Namor sees his pursuers, pours it on, driving harder and faster, up and up. The abyssal darkness begins turning ultramarine, shades of color return. Defiant:

NAMOR
Come on up if you dare...

The water becomes brighter, a Squid Rider and mount are almost on him when the Rider suddenly DISTORTS and EXPLODES from the low pressure. The Squid stops to see what happened.

Namor thinks he's got it made, but a swarm of NAUTILID ATTACK CRAFT rocket up out of the gloom behind the Squids.

They're loaded with Commandos and ARMORED ANCIENT ONES of all kinds. They leap to the submarine, begin scrambling over it. Namor tilts the bow up, gives it all he's got.

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - DAY

Glorious, the Tucson RISES, breaching into the open sky, an unbelievable spectacle in the midst of --

-- the U.S. NAVY RESCUE TASK FORCE, the Bar Harbor the nearest ship. VARIOUS REACTION SHOTS: Admiral Keller, Navy Divers, officers, ordinary sailors, stunned, amazed.

INT. BRIDGE, U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

A blazing gunfight rages between the humans on the bridge and Kraang's troops in the access-ways.

EXT. BRIDGE WING, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

The Bar Harbor pulls alongside the wallowing Tucson.

ADMIRAL KELLER
What are those things?

Commandos skitter over the sub, trying to cut their way in. A COMMANDO LEADER suddenly realizes there's an audience, and it turns the wide bore of a HYDROCANNON on them.

And they hit the deck. The Commando Leader OPENS UP. Spheres of water explode from the weapon at abyssal pressures, raking the superstructure, blowing out windows, pounding huge dents in the metal.

Spent shots rain down on Keller -- literally nothing more than seawater.

EXT. U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Hundreds of Commandos swarm over the side.

EXT. BRIDGE, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Marines on the bridge balconies open fire. The Commandos are almost immune to the small arms, but an occasional shot finds a chink in the armor. Jets of water and anti-freeze blue blood sprays out of their suits, and they collapse.

Kraang's soldiers return fire. Hydrocannons hammer away. Beams of water slice through metal. Sailors caught in the crossfire try to retreat to the safety of the bridge.

INT. WELL DECK - DAY

Jane races through a battle across the well deck, sees the foundering Tucson just off the stern now. It's beginning to roll, and its crew is pouring out of its escape hatches.

Jane ducks behind stacked equipment, looks out at the Tucson survivors. Navy Diver #1 is ducking next to her.

JANE
We've got to get the gate down!

Navy Diver #1 nods, and topples a case. Out spills a .50 caliber sniper rifle with a half dozen HUGE ROUNDS.

NAVY DIVER #1
Depleted uranium. It'll punch through anything!

He lock-n-loads, nods, and Jane jumps up. A Commando attacks her, but Navy Diver #1 shoots out an eye port. She races for the gate controls and --

-- drops the door of the well into the sea. Her animals race out toward the Tucson's sailors.

INT. ILA'S PALACE, UNDERCITY - DAY

Ila looks out from her tower. The undercity is under attack. The Ancient Ones are climbing the multitude of anchor cables, invading the slaveholds. She calls out to the assorted slaves and Slave Drivers:

COUNTESS ILA
They can't swim, they have to climb! Cut the anchors!

EXT. ATLANTIS UNDERCITY - DAY

Anchor cables fray and part. Hordes of attackers fall away to the ocean plain far below. Atlantis gathers way.

INT. OVERSEERS' TOWER, ATLANTIS UNDERCITY - DAY

Ila doesn't see the ARMORED ANCIENT ONE enter behind her. It's humanoid, scary, about to whack her, and --

-- BULL grabs it from behind, bangs it on the floor, then rips its helmet off. A gush of hot water and ash pour out, then he fishes in, pulling out a WORM-LIKE THING. He sniffs it, decides it's not edible, and throws it aside.

A Slave Driver enters.

SLAVE DRIVER
Countess, the Upper City has fallen.

COUNTESS ILA
We need Namor. Where is he?

SLAVE DRIVER
He has gone to the surface.

Ila looks at him, then at the empty SUIT OF ARMOR.

INT. THRONE ROOM, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Alone, Thakkor sees his city taken over. Kraang's troops march everywhere. Buildings are under siege, pockets of resistance are crushed by wave torpedoes from the Cruiser.

EXT. BRIDGE, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

The attackers push in on the bridge, relentless when --

EXT. U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

-- out of the water leaps Namor. He lands on the deck and wades into the fight. He punches, drop-kicks, hammers Commandos left and right. They explode like fire hydrants. He bounds up to the bridge wing and --

EXT. BRIDGE WING, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Lands in front of Admiral Keller. A beat, then Keller empties his sidearm into Namor. Namor looks down.

The bullets have torn skin, but haven't penetrated. But they're NOT healing either.

He looks up at the sun, baking down with tropical fury. It's DRYING HIM OUT. A Commando Leader clambers over the edge, and Namor throws an elbow, crushing it.

ADMIRAL KELLER
Whose side are you on?

NAMOR
My own. We don't have to be enemies.

But it comes out FEARSOME, Namor with his white eyes and the deep rattle of echolocation in his throat. He turns --

-- as a GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER ranges alongside, coming to the aid of the Bar Harbor. Its PHALANX CIWS CHAIN GUNS train on Namor. He leaps from the bridge wing to --

EXT. FLIGHT DECK, BAR HARBOR - DAY

-- the helicopter deck just before the Phalanxes go ACTIVE. The anti-missile cannons roar to life at 40,000 rounds a minute, rake over the Bar Harbor after Namor.

He runs a gauntlet of Nautilid Commandos. They explode in spectacular fountains of water, but shield him as he reaches the opposite side of the ship and DIVES OFF.

EXT. U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor, surfaces. Another cruiser moves along this side of the Bar Harbor, its Phalanxes mowing down attackers.

EXT. PILOT'S TOWER, ATLANTIS - DAY

Kraang approaches the Pilot. The Squid Master and a platoon of Commandos are behind him.

KRAANG
Atlantis is mine. Obey me.

PILOT OF ATLANTIS
The law of Ictheus All-Father says even an Emperor's commands hold no force over The Pilot of Atlantis.

Kraang grabs him by the scruff, hurls him aside. A bulky, half-machine ARMORED NAVIGATOR takes his place.

Kraang looks up toward the surface, the flashes of light, the thunder of the battle overhead.

KRAANG
Destroy the humans.
(to Squid Master)
Now find Thakkor.

EXT. SURFACE OF OCEAN - DAY

ASW Helicopters move across screen in the b.g., dropping torpedoes after underwater enemies as Namor surfaces. The Bar Harbor, though holed and smoking, has been picked clean of attackers. It is rescuing the crew of the Tucson.

Which begins a lazy stern-down death-dive.

Floyd suddenly surfaces in front of Namor, his high-pitched dolphin-voice perfectly intelligible:

FLOYD
Men inside.

Namor supercavitates after him.

INT. U.S.S. TUCSON - DAY

With a blast of water Namor slams through the hull into an air-filled compartment. It's all going vertical. He crashes through the ship, punching through flood control barriers.

He tears off a final hatch just as the Tucson SPLITS IN TWO. The sea hits him in the face, and he watches the heavier engineering space twist away for the depths.

From it are expelled two UNCONSCIOUS SAILORS. He speeds down, grabs them, heads for the surface.

EXT. WELL DECK - DAY

Namor rises from the water on the sea gate with the two sailors. Marines and rescued crew back away. A couple of daring souls wade onto the ramp to take them from him.

Navy Diver #1 chambers a DPU round, draws a bead on Namor. Jane sees him.

JANE
No!

And an ARMORED FIGURE rises from the water next to Namor. Namor turns to confront it.

BANG. A jet of water sprays out of the figure's chest. It's tainted RED, not antifreeze blue like a Nautilid's.

It's Ila. She blinks, can't believe she's been shot, and collapses in his arms.

NAMOR
NO!

Namor backs down the ramp, taking Ila with him.

EXT. MIDWATER - DAY

They flutter down together, Namor opening the suit of armor. A red cloud of blood billows out. He puts his hand over her chest to try to stop the blood.

COUNTESS ILA
Atlantis... in danger. Needs you.
(re: surface, looking up)
I forgot... for a second...
they're different.

NAMOR
Hang on. Hang on. Hang on.

But she's gone, her blood hazing Namor's sight red. A LONG BEAT. And then he RISES FROM ILA, ENRAGED.

EXT. WELL DECK - DAY

BAM! The whole ship LURCHES. Jane falls to the deck.

EXT. WATER UNDER STERN, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor, eyes white, punches in one of the huge screw blades.

NAMOR
WHY!? Why!?

Throwing BLOWS, bringing the screw to a warping stop:

NAMOR
She didn't do anything to you!

He grabs it, and with a burst of horrifying rage, tears the screw - drive shaft and all - straight out of the ship.

INT. WELL DECK - DAY

Jane stumbles toward the stern between blows.

EXT. WATER UNDER STERN, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor hurls screw and drive shaft to the abyss. He smashes huge dents in the hull.

NAMOR
All you can do is kill kill kill it! Cause that's what you do best! Kraang is right, you're all criminals! My name is Namor and I am vengeance! You want to see what you're killing? You want to see what's down there? I'll show you what's down there!

He grabs the ship and begins to DRIVE THE STERN UNDER.

EXT. U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

The ship's bow tips up. Everyone grabs on.

EXT. WATER UNDER STERN, U.S.S. BAR HARBOR - DAY

Namor drives the stern under degree by degree. He's going to sink it, but at the last second before the Well Deck goes under and floods he sees:

JANE, standing there at the rail. He stops. For an eternal moment he stares at her, and she at him. The ship poised on this precarious fulcrum.

JANE
Come back to me.

NAMOR
I can't.

JANE
Then take me with you.

It's not possible either, and she sees it in his eyes. He releases the ship. And with a final look back at her, he turns and DIVES.

EXT. PILOT'S TOWER - DAY

The Navigator's multiple arms pull a series of levers.

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

Control surfaces down the sides of the city deploy, and Atlantis slows, opening up like a giant lionfish.

The hydrodynamic forces are enormous. EDDIES form in front of the control planes, begin spiralling up, growing into monstrous tornadoes of water --

EXT. SURFACE OF OCEAN - DAY

-- which reach the surface as giant WHIRLPOOLS. Jane looks out, sees a destroyer list, spiral, and then GO DOWN. Other maelstroms open up, and other ships begin foundering.

JANE
Oh my God.

EXT. ATLANTIS - DAY

Namor approaches the upper city. It is clearly under Kraang's control. He burns through the Trans-City Rift which takes him through the center of Atlantis --

INT. UNDERCITY - DAY

-- into the undercity where the slaves are still holding out against Squids and Riders.

INT. SLAVEHOLD - DAY

Namor springs from the water into the middle of a mass of slaves.

NAMOR
Listen to me!

His voice booms out with undertones of Speaking power.

NAMOR
Shark Legion smashed like clam!

A CHEER goes up.

NAMOR
Not by me. By Duke Kraang.

A deep and serious silence falls over them.

NAMOR
Countess Ila is gone. Thakkor no longer rules you. No one does. We can't let Kraang have Atlantis. Come fight him with me!

A DEAFENING ROAR goes up. And then waves of airbreathers, empty into the sea.

EXT. CANYON PALATINE - DAY

Out of the Trans-City Rift emerges an enormous SLAVE ARMY. Armored Commandos and Squid Riders turn to fight them, but there are thousands upon thousands of slaves, their numbers matched only by their variety. And each has its own unique way of cracking shells.

Bull smashes through various Ancient Ones. Nothing tasty; everything's undersized. He looks up at the Pilot's Tower, sees the big Navigator, and smiles.

INT. THRONE ROOM, IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Thakkor stares out the window. Eight Nautilid Commandos burst in, aiming weapons. They spread out over the walls: all secure for Kraang. The Squid Master follows.

KRAANG
Give me the Throne.

The Octopus Throne slowly turns Thakkor to face him.

THAKKOR
You'll have to come get it.

With that, the OCTOPUS THRONE FLARES TO LIFE, its eight arms unsheathing an array of bizarre ceremonial weapons. The Nautilid Commandos attack. The Throne fights like a killer Hindu god, its multiple arms taking on all comers.

KRAANG
Impressive. But unfortunately for you I have nine henchmen.

The Throne skewers, slices, smashes the eight Commandos; but there's no ninth arm to fight the Squid Master. He floats right up and grabs Thakkor by the neck.

Thakkor spears him with his trident, but the instant the Squid Master pulls him off the Throne, the Throne sheaths its weapons and coils up dormant.

The Squid Master pulls the trident out, casts it away in disdain. He carries Thakkor to Kraang.

KRAANG
I suppose it's beyond you to die gracefully.

NAMOR (OC)
Why don't you show him how it's done?

Kraang turns. Namor is right there, his supercavitating FIST in transit. POW! The shock throws Kraang through the water.

Kraang recovers, turns his demonic red-black, and shoots jets of viscous acid at Namor. It burns through all kinds of objects in the b.g., everything except Namor who twirls aside, tackles Kraang.

They spin through all points of the gyroscope, grappling, Namor trying to avoid Kraang's lethal touch. Though Namor's much stronger, Kraang's slime coating makes him slippery. Kraang breaks free. They circle each other.

KRAANG
You have what you came for. Go back to your world.

NAMOR
This is my world.

Kraang releases a multi-colored chemical cloud from his hands which bursts into a GREEN BALL OF FLAME. Kraang hurls it, but Namor throws up a BUBBLE SHIELD and the vacuum extinguishes it.

Namor lunges. Kraang opens his stinger hands to receive him, but Namor STOPS SHORT of impact, hitting him at point-blank range with a double pressure wave. The force blasts Kraang into the wall, stunning him.

Namor draws the BLACK TOOTH from the leg sheath in which he now keeps it; it fits him like some lost extension of his body. He approaches Kraang, twirling it. Whether it's instinct or he's an experienced knife fighter, it scares the shit out of Kraang.

Kraang sprays more acid to keep Namor off, but Namor relentlessly advances. They circle, wary. Namor with his knife, Kraang with his poisonous hands.

NAMOR
I've been saving something for you.

Namor's twirling knife distracts Kraang.

KRAANG
What, pray tell, would that be?

NAMOR
A breath of fresh air.

And Namor BLASTS a stream of bubbles from his lungs. Like sunlight to a vampire, the oxygen BURNS Kraang's face to a blistered horror-mask, and Kraang SHRIEKS in crackling agony.

Namor grabs Kraang in a choke-hold, trapping his hands, Black Tooth to Kraang's neck. The Master squeezes tighter on Thakkor. Mexican standoff.

NAMOR
Where I'm from the way this works is the bad guy chickens out and tells his lackey to let the hostage go.

KRAANG
Down here there's always another twist.

Kraang's arm TWISTS at an impossible, triple-jointed angle, and he TOUCHES Namor, PARALYZING HIM. Kraang spins away, choking and furious. Namor drifts there, a statue.

KRAANG
You will watch as your grandfather dies in excruciating fashion. Though I assure you, I made your mother suffer far worse.

ON NAMOR, his eyes filled with rage. Kraang turns to Thakkor.

KRAANG
And you. To lose your last and only heir the very day you discover him. Extinction, to borrow a phrase... is a bitch.

UNSEEN BY KRAANG: Namor closes his eyes. His lips move.

NAMOR
..ngry...

Kraang hears the choked word. He glides back to Namor.

KRAANG
What's that?

A TINY BABY DOLPHIN, two feet long, so cute you could die, suddenly zips up to Namor.

KRAANG
Ah, you're trying to Speak. I can't *hear* you...

Namor's face contorts with a last, desperate effort to say:

NAMOR
Hungry...

A dozen more tiny dolphins appear, and Kraang LAUGHS. It's mocking, intolerably long...

...and nobody but Namor sees the scarred white head of a GIANT ALBINO SPERM WHALE about to hit the window.

BASH! The monster crashes into the room, and its jaws shut on the Squid Master with a concussive shock. A tilt of its head, and it swallows him whole.

The baby dolphins, squealing in delight, begin nipping at Kraang, following him like a pack of piranhas.

The whale sways from side to side, looking for seconds. Kraang recoils from its huge white head. The whale lets off a series of hammering sonar clicks, searching for him.

Kraang backs up to the wall, caught between the whale and the hungry little dolphins. No way out.

And then he suddenly smiles. His entire body CHANGES COLORS, mottling perfectly to match the wall.

KRAANG
You vertebrates and your hormone-driven aggression...

The whale, which lost him for a second, TURNS RIGHT TO HIM.

KRAANG
...there's something to be said for having no spine.

The whale lunges, but Kraang steps back, flattens to a fraction of his thickness, and squeezes straight through a crack in the wall. The whale butts hard against it. Kraang is gone. Baron Yaw rushes in.

THAKKOR
Just in time.

BARON YAW
Majesty, look outside!

EXT. PILOT'S TOWER, ATLANTIS

The Slaves have beaten Kraang's army back. Bull sits in the Pilot's Tower, preparing to feast on the huge Navigator, but reaches into the cracked armor and pulls out the tiniest runt of an Ancient One. The Pilot looks askance at Bull, takes control of the city once again.

EXT. FORBIDDEN GARDEN - DAY

Namor and Thakkor watch workers busy repairing the city -- Fish Men and airbreathers side by side.

NAMOR
They're not slaves any more.
You'd better get used to it.

Thakkor bites his tongue. Then somber, he looks to the surface.

THAKKOR
Is Kraang right? About them?

NAMOR
No. And yes.

Thakkor nods, understands. He moves off. Namor contemplates a dead coral hollow at the heart of his mother's garden: it's Ila's grave. A beat as he closes his eyes, lifts a hand as if in blessing and Speaks.

NAMOR
Come.

A snow-like cloud of coral larvae seems to congeal out of the water, settle over the grave. He turns away. Behind him the first BLOOMS OF COLORED POLYPS OPEN like tiny flowers.

FADE OUT